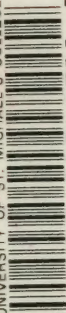
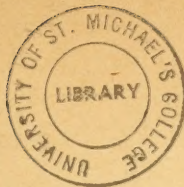


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Rev. M. J. Cline.

THE ART OF SERMON
ILLUSTRATION



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THE ART OF SERMON ILLUSTRATION

BY

H. JEFFS

EDITOR OF "THE CHRISTIAN WORLD PULPIT"

"Storied windows richly dight."—MILTON

SECOND IMPRESSION

LONDON

JAMES CLARKE & CO., 13 & 14 FLEET STREET

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FOREWORD

EVERY preacher covets the power to illustrate his sermons and addresses. Few preachers possess it in any marked degree. A fertile illustrator, like the poet and the painter, is born, not made. None the less, it is possible to cultivate the art; and the purpose of this book is to assist those who realise the necessity of being interesting, and are not destitute of imagination, to develop what gift they have. There are pitfalls in the way of the sermon and address illustrator, and the preacher and speaker will be put on their guard against them. The author has gone to the Bible as a storehouse of illustrations by inspired writers who possessed the art in perfection. Most of all he would send preachers to the Gospels, to Him who "spake as never man spake," and "without a parable spake He not unto them," for matchless examples of the illustration of spiritual truth. None realised as the Master realised how

" Truth embodied in a tale
Shall enter in at lowly doors."

It has been a protracted but pleasant labour to search for illustrations in the sermons of preachers of the past and present, and the harvest has richly repaid the labour. It is hoped that preachers will learn much of the art of illustration from the examples, many of

Foreword

which have been grouped in the chapters, still leaving a large residue for the Appendix of Illustrations. To each illustration a text has been appended, and an Index of Texts is supplied. The author has ventured to include original illustrations, from sermons and addresses he has delivered. He is indebted to preachers and literary friends for the gift of other original illustrations that enrich the book. Illustrated outlines and addresses to children are included to show how illustrations arise out of the subject, and serve the double purpose of lighting up a point and investing the subject with colour and dramatic interest.

The Sunday morning address to children is in increasing demand, but there are few who really succeed in capturing the attention of the eager-minded and keen-witted modern child. The author expresses his thanks, and the thanks of his readers, to the masters of the art who have favoured him with suggestions and presented him with model addresses, from which the preacher, who finds the children "do not listen" when he talks to them, will learn much. The bouquet of "Flowers from Old English Gardens" will, it is hoped, be relished for the quaintness of the illustrations from imaginative preachers and writers of the Golden Age of the seventeenth century.

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THE ART OF SERMON ILLUSTRATION

CHAPTER I

“TRUTH EMBODIED IN A TALE”

“PLEASE tell me a story,” says the child; and “the child is father to the man.” It is a common remark of preachers that nobody listens more eagerly to the children’s address, with its anecdotes, on Sunday morning than the grown-up people. Mr. G. K. Chesterton said that when a grey-bearded gentleman goes into a book-shop just before Christmas and says he wants to see the fairy-books, as he desires to buy some for his nephews and nieces, he is really intending to buy them for himself. The books that are most circulated from the free libraries are novels; the magazines that circulate the most are story magazines. We may look askance at the people who read little besides stories, but their fondness for stories is inherited from their ancestors hundreds of generations back. Before Abraham was, Oriental story-tellers amused and instructed the peoples of the East. Centuries before Moses, the novelette, often with a “moral,” was the popular reading of the Egyptians. Homer and the rhapsodists told their stories of the war of Troy to the soldiers

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round the camp fires and to the grouped peoples of the villages and towns of Hellas. Plato, the supreme teacher and preacher of Greece, charmed his age, and every following age has been charmed, by his stories "with a moral." In the Middle Ages the tales of chivalry were listened to by barons bold and bright-eyed ladies in castle halls, and the "common people" had their legends of the saints and their boisterous tales that often conveyed shrewd wisdom in homely language and with rough humour. We live now in the age of science, of machinery, of education, of philosophy, the age of "the march of the men of mind," and yet people are fonder of stories than ever. They seek escape in stories from the dull grey monotony of the routine of toilsome lives, and the writer who knows how to tell stories that appeal to them is certain of an exceeding rich reward.

But what about the preacher? Is he to put to no account the average man and woman's love of a tale? He wants to open their mind and heart to truths of the most solemn import, on the reception of which the happiness of their lives here and the shaping of their destiny depend. How is he to make them listen, to make them comprehend "the mystery of love," to make them realise that God is their Father, that Christ is the Life and the Light of men, that they are all members of each other, that they are builders of a New Jerusalem; that as they are the heirs of ages of men and women who have created for them a splendid inheritance, so they are bound to add to the inheritance and pass it on to those who come after them, that so they may hasten

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the time when the dreams of prophets and apostles, of saints and martyrs, of heroes of the faith and warrior knights of the Holy Ghost, shall be glorious realities?

Preachers always need to remember that the congregation consists of “the common people,” that is, average people. The congregation is not a congregation of scholars, of theologians and philosophers, whose primary interest in religion is the intellectual interest. It is a congregation of men and women who feel rather than reason their way to faith, whose interest in religion is the practical interest of men and women who feel their need of the help in the crises of life that only a vividly realised supernatural power can give. That power has to be presented to them in concrete dramatic forms rather than in the abstract conceptions of the intellect. They can understand the Christ who walked the holy fields of Galilee, who was a Man with men and yet more than man, who “wrought with human hands the creed of creeds”; but they are listless or impatient when the preacher—who has lived more among books than among men, and is more interested in philosophies, ideas, thoughts, criticism, questions, and what not, than in people, in the colour and drama and crowded incidents of human life—is expounding his thoughts to them, in however well-informed, logical and literary a way it may be. Should such a preacher treat the congregation to an illustration that has a human touch in it, at once they prick their ears, and the illustration will be remembered, with the point illustrated, for years perhaps, whereas the “thoughtful sermon” as a whole will scarcely survive the following

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week. It is worth the while of preachers to study the psychology of the congregation, and to condescend to that psychology, for it is the psychology of men and women as God has made them, rather than for them to expect the average people in the congregation ever to be able to take the thoughtful preacher's interest in the mainly intellectual aspects of religion. Let no dull reader imagine that this is a plea for "anecdotal preaching," the stringing together of ear-tickling stories for their own sake, or that it is a condemnation of the preacher's intellectual self-cultivation. On the contrary, in these days the preacher's brain needs the most intensive cultivation, and the mere pulpit anecdotist is a desecrator of the pulpit and a cheater of the congregation out of its most precious rights. But the preacher preaches for results, and even to get his thoughts infixed he must know how to impress them in ways that will commend them to the common mind, and make a lasting impression on the memory; and there is no way that does this so surely as the way of apt and attractive illustration.

In the "White City" there were English and French pavilions devoted to the "Applied Arts." The gift of illustration is a fine art, and it should be applied to the noblest use—that of elucidating and adorning the points of the preacher's messages. Such masters of the art as Rev. J. H. Jowett, Rev. F. B. Meyer, and Dr. W. L. Watkinson are welcomed by crowded congregations, and they find that the most intellectual people, as well as the less educated, delight in their unforgettable stories and comparisons, by which, as

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nails driven well home, they fix their lessons in the hearers' memories.

What a field for illustration the preacher has in these days, when we have come to see, as never before, that Christ is the Lord of all life, and that His religion should touch and transform life in all its expressions! The “spiritual” is not now regarded as a tiny circle in the centre of a great sphere of the “secular” all round it. “The earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof” — not merely “the cattle upon a thousand hills,” and the fruits and the flowers; but “the King of kings and the Lord of lords” claims to rule by right Divine not only over the saints in the churches, but in Parliament, in the county and borough council and the board of guardians, in the factory, the shop and the counting-house, in the home, in literature and the theatre, in the football field and every other field. But if this be so—if, in the words of the Latin poet, nothing human is foreign to him—then the preacher may gather his illustrations from every field. No novel, no play, no book of science or travel, nothing that happens in common life, no process of art or industry, but will yield its telling illustrations to the skilful preacher. If there is natural law in the spiritual world, there is spiritual law in the natural world, and the natural world will give the preacher innumerable concrete illustrations of spiritual truths. Dr. W. L. Watkinson is particularly happy in his illustrations from science. The illustrations that follow, from Dr. Watkinson and others, will repay study as examples of natural analogies of spiritual truths.

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THE PROCESS OF SIN

In South America a phosphorescent spider is found that attracts and dupes its prey by successive flashes of light ; the moth is apparently dazed, and with the emission of each gleam creeps closer to the transfigured assassin. This is a parable of the process of sin. By successive radiations it also hypnotises its victims to an awful doom. The broad road is a path of enchantment to the natural man even when he treads it with bleeding feet ; but when the promenade is gold, brodered with roses and enlivened by applause, it is irresistible except one is arrested as Balaam was (Job xxiv. 6).—DR. W. L. WATKINSON.

“BROTHERED TO FORGIVE.”

I have read that when a sea-worm perforates the shell of an oyster, the oyster immediately closes the wound with a pearl. I think it is something like that which happens when God helps me to forgive a man who has wronged me to the very heart. For thine own sake, forgive. And for thy brother's sake, forgive. “What am I brothered for?” says George Macdonald, “if not to forgive” (Matt. xviii. 21, 22).—REV. GEORGE JACKSON.

HOPE TO THE END

They tell us that there is a mountain in the swampy districts of Central Africa that people only see for an hour or two in the morning, and as soon as the mists drawn up by the sun rise from the swamps round about it, it is shrouded in cloud. That is like the hopes of a great many Christian people, gleaming out now and then, and then shrouded, and shrouded by the mist that comes up from the undrained swamps. Hope perfectly (1 Pet. i. 13).—DR. MACLAREN.

DWARF CHRISTIANS

One of the strange freaks of Japanese horticulture is the cultivation of dwarf trees. The Japanese grow forest-giants in flower-pots. Some of these strange miniature trees are a century old, and are only two or three feet high. The gardener, instead of trying to get them to grow to their best, takes infinite pains to keep them little. His purpose is to grow dwarfs, not giant trees. From the time of their planting they are repressed, starved, crippled, stunted. When buds appear they are nipped off. So the tree remains only a

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dwarf all its life. Some Christian people seem to do the same thing with their lives. They do not allow themselves to grow. They rob themselves of spiritual nourishment, restrain the noble impulses of their nature, shut out of their hearts the power of the Holy Spirit, and are only dwarf Christians when they might be strong in Christ Jesus, with the abundant life which the Master wants all His followers to have (2 Pet. iii. 18).—DR. J. R. MILLER.

THE VALUE OF RESTS

“There is no music in a rest, but there is the making of music in it.” In our whole life melody the music is broken off here and there by “rests,” and we foolishly think we have come to the end of the tune. God sends a time of forced leisure, sickness, disappointed plans, frustrated efforts, and makes a sudden pause in the choral hymn of our lives, and we lament that our voices must be silent, and our part missing in the music which ever goes up to the ear of the Creator. How does the musician read the rest? See him beat the time with unvarying count and catch up the next note true and steady, as if no breaking-place had come in between. Not without design does God write the music of our lives. Be it ours to learn the time, and not be dismayed at the “rests.” They are not to be slurred over, not to be omitted, not to destroy the melody, not to change the key note. If we look up, God Himself will beat the time for us. With the eye on Him, we shall strike the next note full and clear. If we say sadly to ourselves, “There is no music in a rest,” let us not forget “there is the making of music in it.” The making of music is often a slow and painful process in this life. How patiently God works to teach us! How long He waits for us to learn the lessons (Ps. xxxvii. 7).—RUSKIN.

THE STAIN OF SIN

Pilate thought it an undertaking simple enough when “he took water and washed his hands before the multitude.” Many to-day count it easy. Yet the washing of the hands is a sterner task than at first sight appears. Dr. Leedham-Green, in his work on “The Sterilisation of the Hands,” proves the extreme difficulty, nay, the veritable impossibility, of cleansing the hands from bacteria. Simple washing with soap and hot water, with use of sand or marble dust, however energetically done, does not materially

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diminish the number of microbes ; the mechanical purification is practically useless. Turpentine, benzolene, xylol, alcoholic disinfection, and various antiseptics equally failed to render the hands surgically clean. Is not this unsuccessful quest for physical purity a vivid metaphor of the impossibility of cleansing the hands from the stain of sin and the heart from its virus? (Matt. xxvii. 24).—DR. W. L. WATKINSON.

THE LIVING BIBLE

Professor Plateau, of Ghent, who was well known for his remarkable series of observations and experiments on the relations between insects and flowers, tells of an interesting fact in his researches. For a certain purpose he determined to find out how far insects could be attracted by the reflection of flowers in a mirror. A mirror being placed behind the plant in flower so as to give a good reflection, the visitants were watched. It was all in vain ; the insects went straight to the real flowers, and occupied themselves on them without paying any attention to the reflection. Whilst duly appreciative of all aids to Biblical interpretation, let them not divert you from the living flowers wet with dew, rich with honey, and whose leaves are for the healing of the nations (John vi. 63).—DR. W. L. WATKINSON.

GOD'S JEWELS

A newspaper not long ago contained an article on "The Humble Gems." It was directed to condemn the prevailing fashion of affecting rare and garish jewellery, whilst the more modest gems were neglected. The article proceeded to explain that numbers of jewels hitherto known only to the lapidary are yet of exceeding beauty. "Cinnamon stones," which afford a perfect series of chrome shades from fiery red to golden orange, the white sapphire, the blue spinel, the whole chromatic gamut of zircons, white and pink topazes, and many other tertiary-tinted gems, we were assured await the prevalence of a purer taste. The writer proceeded to say that in Ceylon there is a perfect waste of most beautiful material. Part of a railway is ballasted with white crystalline limestone studded with lovely blue spinels ; the foundations of a bridge were laid in a bed containing myriads of decomposed rubies in rose-red flakes of singular beauty ; sapphires were found in the broken metal used to mend the roads ; and whole lengths of rose

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quartz were laid in the ruts to be ground to powder by bullock carts. Just as there are heaps of modest jewels of special beauty entirely overlooked, and cart-ruts gleaming with disregarded treasure, so are there humbler gems of humanity whose strong pure life is the poetry of city street and obscure hamlet. These lowly toilers reveal the rarest qualities of conscience and heart; and although they do not captivate the carnal eye as do fashionable brilliants and historic diamonds, yet are they His jewels who knows the exact value of us all, and they shall have their honoured place in His diadem in the great day (Mal. iii. 17).—DR. W. L. WATKINSON.

The illustrations given should open the preacher's eyes to the use he can make of facts of science, art and industry. The study of science and nature books will have the incidental advantage of opening his eyes to the wonders of the world he lives in, and he will cultivate his own powers of observation in order to collect original illustrations, for none are so effective as those of the preacher's own finding. The late Dr. C. A. Berry was keenly interested in machinery, and often drew illustrations from what he had noticed at a railway station or in going over some works. He used to tell how once he went over a works and was nearly deafened by the rattle of the machinery. He was finally taken into a room where there was very little noise, although powerful engines were at work. “This,” he was told, “is the power house, that keeps all the machinery going.” The spiritual power house, Dr. Berry said, is the prayer meeting or the chamber where the Christian in secret pours out his soul in prayer. All there is quiet, a solemn hush, and apparently little is being done or produced; but stop the engine of prayer, and all the machinery will come

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to a standstill; let down the fires in the power house, and all the machinery will slacken.

Another excellent machinery illustration, teaching a different lesson, is this by Dr. Lyman Abbott:—

OUT OF GEAR WITH GOD

Go into a factory full of spindles and wheels and all intricate machinery; all are connected with some great driving wheel, and when the band is connected all the wheels begin to revolve and all the spindles to play their music. Now imagine every wheel and spindle with a will and purpose of its own, and keep the bands off and let every spindle dance to its own tune—what product would you get from your factory? The world is out of gear with God, that is the trouble; and you and I, if we are lawless, are just in so far out of gear with God, and nothing can make our life right save by swinging back into oneness with God, to will what He wills, to do what He would have us do (1 John iii. 4).—DR. LYMAN ABBOTT.

Such illustrations, to a congregation that includes employers and working men in the great industries, cannot fail to strike home. They will be impressed by the essential reasonableness of the appeal to keep the power in adequate supply, and the machinery, on the working of which progress and profits depend, in good going order, and all the processes of industry well co-ordinated. An incidental advantage will be that their respect will be increased for a preacher who is not too much absorbed in other-worldly concerns to take an interest in such matters.

CHAPTER II

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF ILLUSTRATION

ILLUSTRATIONS have been called windows. The primary purpose of an illustration, from which it takes its name, is to light up that which is being illustrated. Usually something that is less familiar and more remote from common experience is made clearer by the analogy of something that is more familiar and within the range of common experience. Spiritual truths require deeper insight for perception and realisation than things that make themselves known to us through our physical senses. After all, however, our spiritual nature is as substantial a reality as our physical nature, and as Henry Drummond demonstrated in "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," the methods of Providence in the higher spiritual realm follow much the same course as the laws of Nature in the realm of things physical and material. And in the Bible there is continual illustration of the ways of God to man and the relations of God to His children from the experiences of our common physical life. The Fatherhood of God Himself can only be understood by reference to fatherhood in the ordinary human family. Spiritual realities have to be tested and tried in just the same way as we test and try things that are necessary to the maintenance of a healthy physical life. We are to "taste and see how gracious

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the Lord is." The preacher who is impressing spiritual truths on the minds of people who are living in the material world, and whose minds are continually occupied with material interests, will feel himself under continual necessity to translate the spiritual into the terms of the material, and this means illustration. Without the illustration the minds of many in the congregation will find the spiritual truths too elusive for their grasp. If they are of quick intelligence, and are naturally elect souls, with keen appetites for the spiritual, and with the inner vision which pierces through the material veil of the things seen to the things unseen beyond, then the preacher may content himself, perhaps, with delivering his messages in the dialect of the purely spiritual, relying on the quick apprehension of his congregation to follow him. But where is the elect congregation to be found who can be trusted to apprehend and comprehend the spiritual without the material analogies? The preacher must always assume that his congregation consists of average people, and that the spiritual truth he has to communicate needs the mediation of material illustration.

The preacher endeavouring to illustrate a spiritual truth must take care that the illustration is such as will really let in light upon the truth, as would limelight turned upon a dimly seen object, and especially must he turn the light upon those features of the object which it is desired to make prominent. The parables of Jesus remain the matchless models of the illustration that clearly and sharply defines the object, and at the same time casts no illusive and misleading shadows. Very

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often, however, illustrations are used that, instead of making the spiritual truth more definite, really distort it, or confuse the hearer by the introduction of irrelevant details that may distract his attention from the essential point, and perhaps send him away with a false conception of the truth, which it may take years to correct, if it is ever corrected at all.

The story or simile used for an illustration should be simple. It should make clear just what it is desired to make clear and no more. It should be precisely adapted to serve the purpose for which it is designed. Often, instead of a story, some fact of Nature or of science may be used to illustrate a law of the spiritual life. Dr. W. L. Watkinson and Dr. A. Maclaren have made particularly profitable use of simple illustrations from books of science and travel. Some illustrations of this kind were given in the previous chapter. I add a further selection :—

BLIND EYES AND EYES THAT SEE

In the deep seas are creatures which have dwelt so long in the darkness that it has put out their eyes. They had perfect eyes once, but these have atrophied in the persistent gloom ; the organ of vision has perished—only the socket remains. It is thus to-day with thousands of men and women, and these the most reflective and serious. They have pondered the things of anguish and death until their eyes have been quenched in a gulf of dark despair. They no longer can behold God ; they are unable to recognise the Divine government ; they can see no prospect of a rational issue to a chaotic world. There has befallen them the terrible curse of spirit-blindness ; the eyes of their heart are sightless.

There is, however, another strange fact. In the same sunless deeps are animals with eyes of extraordinary size. But the marvellous thing is that these particular creatures have in a high

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degree the power of manufacturing their own light, and the economising of the delicate phosphorescence has developed in them eyes of remarkable magnitude and power. With their self-created luminousness these abyssal fish withstand the blackness of their environment, and indirectly the darkness has secured for them eyes far more splendid than those of their shallow water relatives. Thus is it in the abyss in which we live, and which proves to so many a gulf of dark despair. There are thousands of noble men and women with splendid eyes. They see God as clearly as any angel in Heaven can see Him ; they behold His government over them causing all things to work together for their good ; they view the golden consummation to which the universe tends. The very darkness that presses upon them has taught them the secret of making light in themselves, and it has developed in them a power of vision that pierces to the heart of things (Matt. xiii. 13, 14).—DR. W. L. WATKINSON.

THE CEASELESS FLOW OF LOVE

Niagara stopped once ; owing to an ice dam thrown across the river the waters failed, the rainbow melted, the vast music was hushed. But there has been no moment in which the love of God has failed toward the rational universe, when its eternal music has been broken, or the rainbow has ceased to span the throne. There never will be such a moment. The crystal tide flows richly and flows for ever (Jer. xxxi. 3).—DR. W. L. WATKINSON.

THE WEAPONS ON THE WALL

Brothers ! who is there amongst us that has worked and fought up to the edge of his capacity ? There is no more wasteful instrument, they tell us, than a steam-engine ; so little motive power comes out for so much heat applied, and such a quantity is lost. So it is with us. All the warmth that radiates from Jesus Christ is poured into the icy deadness of the reservoirs of our hearts, and the effect is only to raise the temperature such a very little, and to get two or three feeble strokes of the piston. We hang our weapons on the wall, as they do in baronial mansions, for ornament, instead of taking them down for use. None of us can plead “not guilty” to the charge of neglected opportunities and unused powers, and talents hid in a napkin, and there are some of us to whom this

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charge of my text comes with a very special weight of accusation and condemnation. What a dead mass of idle people there are in every Christian congregation and Church ! (Ps. lxxviii. 9).—DR. MACLAREN.

IN CONTACT WITH CHRIST

I have seen a heavy piece of solid iron hanging on another, not welded, not linked, not glued to the spot ; and yet it cleaved with such tenacity as to bear not only its own weight, but mine too if I chose to seize it and hang upon it. A wire charged with an electric current is in contact with its mass. Cut that wire through, or remove it by a hair's breadth, and the piece drops dead to the ground like any other unsupported weight. A stream of life from the Lord, brought into contact with a human spirit, keeps the spirit cleaving to the Lord so firmly that no power on earth or hell can wrench the two asunder. In that circuit the feeblest Christian is held safely ; but if the circuit be broken, the dependent spirit instantly drops off (John xiv. 20).—DR. ARNOT.

THE UNSEEN RESULTS

We ought to know better than to despair over the visible result of spiritual endeavour. During a recent visit to Johannesburg I spent a day at one of the gold-mines. There was immense activity, gangs of workers, clouds of dust, hissing steam, deafening stamps, heaps of quartz, torrents of water and cauldrons of slime ; but I came away without having seen a single speck of gold. The engineer touched the bottom of a turbid stream, and exclaimed, "There is a particle" ; it was, however, as invisible to me as the same metal usually is on the collection-plate. Yet, when on the return journey our ship anchored at Southampton, we discharged boxes of gold-dust to the tune of a million. Thus to-day our evangelical work proceeds with noise of machinery, smoke and stir, sweat and blood, and a thousand things that are trivial and trying to the carnal eye, but the practical spiritual gain is often depressingly dubious (Isa. lv. 11).—DR. W. L. WATKINSON.

SOFT-BONED CHRISTIANS

One of the great cities of our island was recently concerned with the softness of the children's limbs. Their limbs were threaded

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with bending gristle rather than with firm and well-knit bone. And what is the explanation? That the water they drink is too soft, destitute of the harder elements, lacking the lime which goes to the making of bone. Aye, and in the Christian life, when the bones are too soft and gristly, or when the backbone is altogether wanting, the cause may frequently be found in too soft a water supply, in the ignoring of the hard and severer elements of Christian truth. The water of Calvinism was hard, hard enough, but it made bone, fine bone, bone that never would bend, bone that could only be broken (Rom. xi. 22).—REV. J. H. JOWETT, M.A.

Sometimes, instead of a single illustration, the truth may be more indelibly impressed on the memory, and the imagination of the hearers be more effectively stimulated, by using a sequence of similes or short illustrations. This was a favourite method of Jesus Himself, as in the trilogy of Parables of the Lost Things, and in the succession of parables with which He describes the Kingdom of Heaven. The preacher who can pile up illustrations that reinforce each other, and produce a cumulative effect, is a happy man. It is a method that requires a skilful workman to use it, because the illustrations which will reinforce each other must not too closely resemble each other. They will be illustrations drawn from different fields, and their effect is produced by showing how the same law works under various conditions. As examples of the cumulative method, take the following extracts from sermons of Dean Farrar and Dr. Maclaren :—

“SOME USE TO SOMEBODY”

“Do you ken, sir,” a voice called out at a Glasgow operative meeting, “do you ken, sir, how the streets of the New Jerusalem are kept clean?” “No,” said the clergyman. “Well,” replied the man, “each one aye sweeps before his own door.”

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"If I go out," said John Newton, "and see a child crying because it has lost a ha'penny, and by giving it another ha'penny can dry its tears, I do not consider the day to have been absolutely wasted." "O God!" so some of the French nuns are taught to pray, "O God, grant that this day I may be of some use to somebody."

St. Theresa once wanted to build an orphanage, but she had only three shillings, and someone jeeringly said to her, "What can you do to build an orphanage with only three shillings?" "Theresa with three shillings," was the answer, "can do nothing, but with three shillings and with God to help her there is nothing that Theresa cannot do!" (John vi. 28).—DR. F. W. FARRAR.

"GIRD UP THE LOINS"

A loose robe tangles a man's feet, trips him up if he tries to run, gets caught in the thorns, may be laid hold of by an enemy that wants to drag him back; and every toil, and every travel, and every battle you have got to tuck it up well from the waist. It is a very Eastern metaphor. May I substitute an English vulgarism for it which means precisely the same thing?—Pull yourselves together, that is to say, you will get no radiance of Christian hope in your lives without making a great effort for it. A sixpence held close to a man's eye will shut out the sun from him. There is only a certain quantity of energy and power of attention given to us, and if we direct it all in one quarter there will be none of it left for the other. You may take all the water out of the river and turn it in by a sluice into a miller's lake to grind his corn, and then the bed of the stream is left empty, and that is what a great many of us do. "Gird up the loins of your mind"; make the effort, for without the effort you will never rise into the great region of this hope (1 Pet. i. 13).—DR. MACLAREN.

A warning should be given against using illustrations that are too obvious. The illustration should aim, not only at directing a ray of light upon the truth, but at interesting the hearer, and if it is obvious and hackneyed, it is not likely to interest. This does not mean that illustrations should not be drawn from the things and incidents of common life, for Jesus Himself drew His

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illustrations from the things that were familiar to the average man and woman among His hearers. It does mean, however, that the preacher should invest the commonplace with the dignity and romance that are given by showing their relation to spiritual truth—in other words, the preacher must be an artist in his use of illustrations. An artist will paint a bit of commonplace country landscape in such a way that everybody who sees his picture will wonder that they never saw in the bit of country the beauty and significance with which the artist has invested it. He will paint a portrait of some child whom nobody but its mother had ever distinguished from a crowd of children, and when we see his picture we understand why Jesus took the children into His arms and blessed them. He will paint some weather-worn old fisherman or farm labourer, or some grannie with withered cheeks and furrowed brow, and in his pictures of the man of the soil and the man of the sea we shall have symbols of the dignity of the toil that wrings from the soil and the sea its harvest for the food of man, and the picture of the grannie will touch and soften the heart of the spectator by its revelation of the soul of the woman who has faithfully done her duty in her day and generation, has worked unremittingly without complaint, has won the undying love of her children and her grandchildren, and at eventide it is light with her as calmly she awaits the summons to join those who have gone before her to the land of eternal re-union. Everything in God's world is divine if seen in "the light that never was on sea or land," and the preacher will take the most commonplace

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things as illustrations of spiritual truths, and the things will be glorified by the use he makes of them.

The striking use that may be made of things that are essentially commonplace, but may be glorified by their association with spiritual truths, is shown in the following examples :—

“I AND THE CHILDREN ”

The other day I saw a woman who was carrying a child slip on the pavement. In the act of falling, with a dexterity they could not teach in a gymnasium in twenty years, she held up the child unharmed ; and when the people gathered about her, forgetting her own bruises, she gaily boasted, “Never mind, I’ve saved the child.” Whatever be our present struggles and trials, all will quickly be forgotten if we may only boast before the Throne, “Behold, I and the children which God hath given me” (Heb. ii. 13).—DR. W. L. WATKINSON.

THE NEW HEART

A man has bought a farm, and he finds on that farm an old pump. He goes to the pump and begins to pump. And a person comes to him and says, “Look here, my friend, you do not want to use that water. The man that lived here before, he used that water, and it poisoned him and his wife and children—the water did.” “Is that so?” says the man. “Well, I will soon make that right. I will find a remedy.” And he goes and gets some paint, and he paints up the pump, putties up all the holes, and fills up the cracks in it, and has got a fine-looking pump. And he says, “Now I am sure that it is all right.” You would say, “What a fool, to go and paint the pump when the water is bad !” But that is what the sinners are up to. They are trying to paint up the old pump when the water is bad. It was a new well he wanted. When he dug a new well it was all right. *Make the fountain good and the stream will be good.* Instead of painting the pump and making new resolutions, stop it, and ask God to give you a new heart (Ps. li. 10).—D. L. MOODY.

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WEAKNESS LINKED TO STRENGTH

I observed on one of our new trams—a great heavy electric tram pursuing its ponderous way along the metals—a young fellow, who was not a very good hand at bicycling, come up and catch hold of the iron rail, and as the great tram swung on, he went with it. He was not fool enough to try and make the tram come his way, and as we swept round curves he swept round also, and the speed we went he went, and his bicycle just followed suit so easily, swiftly, and naturally. And as I saw him speeding along I said: “May I link on with the movement of Thy mighty purpose on the iron rails of justice and love! Sweep on, O Son of God, in Thy great work for men, and let me be linked with Thee for ever” (1 Cor. xii. 6).—REV. F. B. MEYER, B.A.

BREEZES FROM THE EVERLASTING HILLS

Said an old villager to me, concerning the air of his elevated hamlet, “Ay, sir, it’s a fine air is this westerly breeze; I like to think of it as having travelled from the distant fields of the Atlantic!” And here is the Apostle Paul, with the quickening wind of redemption blowing about him in loosening, vitalising, strengthening influence, and to him, in all his thinking, it had its birth in the distant fields of eternity! (Eph. iii. 11).—REV. J. H. JOWETT, M.A.

JESUS CHRIST A CANDIDATE.

A deacon of a Congregational church in the North of Scotland was canvassing at a Parliamentary election. He was canvassing for—I will not say which party. He went in to see an old man who was so very spiritual that he would not concern himself at all with the national welfare, and he asked this old man for whom he intended to vote. At first the old man said, “I am not going to vote at all.” Then this canvasser urged upon him the claims of the candidate on whose behalf he had called, and the old man again answered, “So-and-so is not my man. The Lord Jesus Christ is my Man.” This deacon, a Congregational deacon, made this foolish answer: “Jesus Christ is not a candidate in this election.” That is where all the mischief comes in. We say that Jesus Christ is not a candidate in this election because we are often a people without vision. Jesus Christ is a candidate in every election (Luke xix. 14).—DR. A. E. GARVIE.

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THE LORD'S HONEY

Billy Bray said that when he was converted he felt like a man in a new world, and years afterwards testified, "Well, friends, I've taken vinegar and honey, but, praise the Lord! I've had the vinegar with a spoon and the honey with a ladle." He had caught the spirit of the Master; for none entered into the gladness of living more fully than Jesus, who graced with His presence a marriage feast, and associated so freely with His fellow men even in their social enjoyment, that His critics exclaimed, "He eats and drinks with publicans and sinners" (Luke vii. 34).—REV. J. H. RUSHBROOKE, M.A.

THE SPIRIT'S WOOING

When shall we begin the wooing? When I had written that sentence I chanced to lift my eyes from the paper, and I saw a tender fruit-sapling just laden with blossom! At what age may a sapling blossom? At what age may a young life begin to blossom for the King? To revert to my figure—when shall we begin the wooing? Plato said: "The most important part of education is right training in the nursery." And Ruskin said: "When do you suppose the education of a child begins? At six months old it can answer smile with smile, and impatience with impatience." Perhaps we have to begin the wooing even in the speechless years. In the life of the Spirit I believe in early wooings because I believe in early weddings! The wooing and the wedding become increasingly difficult when we pass the age of twelve. As for the wedding itself, the betrothal to the Lord, I would have it a very decisive act. It must be a conscious, intelligent consecration (Hos. ii. 19).—REV. J. H. JOWETT, M.A.

WEEDS IN NEGLECTED SOIL

Some time ago I reviewed a book by a clergyman who found that his glebe land had been left for many years uncultivated. He wanted to cultivate it, but found that the soil was so knotted together with squitch and was so poisoned with noxious weeds that it took years to clean it and prepare it for the cultivation of anything that was worth cultivating. So it is, only much more so, with the man or woman who has allowed heart and mind to be overgrown with the rank weeds of self-indulgence. Those weeds

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are deeply rooted, and they need painful pulling and digging out, so painful that one needs almost superhuman strength of will to accomplish the operation (Gal. v. 19—21).—H. JEFFS.

GOD WANTS US

Dr. Parker once in my hearing used a beautiful illustration. He was spending a holiday somewhere. He went with a little child into the fields. She showed her devotion to him by running and gathering posies of wild flowers which even embarrassed him to carry them all. "Did I need them?" said he in his characteristic fashion. "Did I need them?" No. "Did I want them?" Yes. "Does God need us?" No. "He has chosen the weak things to confound the mighty." "Does He want us?" Yes, yes, praise to His name. He does want us. From the humble gathering of the fishermen down to us the commission runs (John xxi. 19; Luke vii. 37).—REV. R. J. CAMPBELL, M.A.

THE MUSIC OF HEAVEN.

You have heard Santley or Madame Patti sing. Oh, is it possible that there could be such notes in a human throat? What God can do! You have heard some of the sweet singers of Nature. One beautiful evening in the gloaming I was cycling in the South of England with a friend. We were shooting down a hill. On either side of us there were the woods. And by-and-by he jumped off his machine, and he said: "Stop!" And I stopped. I said, "What is the matter?" "Can't you hear, man?" "Hear what?" I listened, and from the woods on either side there came the song of the nightingales—one, two, three, four, five, six. If you have never heard the nightingale sing you don't know how much music God can cram into a little bird's throat. "Ear hath not heard" the wondrous music, that music of heaven; neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive (1 Cor. ii. 9).—REV. SAMUEL HORTON.

PAPER FLOWERS AND GARDEN ROSES

In winter-time one occasionally sees in a flower-glass an artificial rose made of paper, with a green stem very green, and a red leaf extremely red—horrid things, I think them—and we cannot help remembering the beautiful rosebud that blossomed in

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the garden a few months ago. What is the difference? The first required clever workmanship, it was the task of patient fingers, and yet we hesitate not a moment to give the prize to the second. What is the difference? The first was made and the other grew. That is all. Even so there is a difference of worlds between artificial characters and characters in Christ. The one is made like the rough marble block chiselled and hammered and hewn into shape, indeed a wonderful testimony to human industry and skill ; but, after all is said and done, *it is made, it is made* ; while the other is born of the Spirit, shooting out in dainty lines and lineaments, taking on a graceful shape, putting forth beautiful features, rounded in a charming manner—a full and finished life. The one suggests strain, the other suggests peace (1 Kings vii. 21, 22).—REV. FRANK Y. LEGGATT.

If the preacher is telling a story by way of illustration, he should be able to tell it in such a way as to excite the curiosity of the congregation and keep its interest and attention until the story is completed. The story may not be much in itself, but it may gain a very great deal by the manner in which it is told, while the best of stories may lose most of its effect if it is related mechanically and without any dramatic effect. Nothing is so wearisome as a badly told story, and a preacher who has not acquired the art of story-telling had better limit himself to an occasional simile. If the congregation can guess as soon as the story begins what the end is going to be their interest is not excited or is at once exhausted. The skilful illustrator makes the congregation wait for the point of the story which, like that of an epigram, should not be clearly realised until the end. The element of surprise is an invaluable element in a story illustration. The fact that the curiosity of the audience has been set on edge fixes the

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story in the memory, and sets the imagination of the hearers at work.

I put together some story illustrations as good examples of the artful maintenance of the interest by keeping the congregation waiting until the story was finished.

THE HUNTED SOUL

A very dear and intimate friend of mine only this last week related to me a dream which had been blessed by God to the redemption of his own father. The father dreamt that he was a hare, and a hare he was. So real and so graphic was the consciousness of the dream that he felt he could almost smell the dewy turnip-tops of the fields amongst which he hopped. Suddenly he heard the cry of the hounds. He pricked his ears, listened, and bolted full pace across the fields. The hounds drew nearer and nearer, and came at last so close to him that he could feel their hot breath. Then he found that he was leaving the green pastures and was reaching bare and rugged heights; and just when he had reached those bare and rocky heights he became conscious that his pursuers were not hounds. They were his sins, and he was a flying soul! Away up, away up, away up towards the summit he saw a cave, and terrified beyond measure he made for the cave and then turned round. The entrance to the cave was flooded with a most unearthly light, and just in the centre of the opening there shone resplendently a cross, standing between him and the awful things that pursued. He awoke, and behold, it was a dream. But he was redeemed.

“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee!”

(Col. ii. 14).—REV. J. H. JOWETT, M.A.

THE INFLUENCE OF ONE MAN

During a lull in the battle of Magersfontein, when it almost seemed as if the Highlanders had lost heart, there came wandering into an open space a piper with his pipes under his arm. An officer, Major Anson, who was killed an hour later, rushed up

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to him and said in the Scotch dialect, "Blaw, man, blaw your pipes!" The piper replied, "I canna; my lips are dry." The officer tried to pull out his water-bottle from his belt and give the poor fellow a drink, but he was unable to do so. The man knelt down, and putting his mouth to the neck of the bottle drew a long draught. Then into the muggy, misty air the skirl of the pipes was heard once more, playing the well-known tune, "Hey, Johnny Cope, are ye wakin' yet?" As he stood there marking time with the stamping of his foot, gradually from different places his comrades began to gather round him. Other pipers joined in the tune, and presently the tide was stemmed once more. The men were sifted into regiments, and then into companies. Parched with thirst and weary with the long fight, they stood there in the lines mopping their faces on their coat-sleeves. And once more they charged, and although at enormous loss, the advance was made. It is a vivid picture of the influence of *one man* in the supreme moment of necessity. Who can tell—God knows—but that this evening that man may be here, through whose stand, open and confessed, for Christ, not one but many souls will be turned to righteousness (Heb. xi. 34).—REV. DONALD SAGE MACKAY.

THE MOTHER HEART

A friend of mine some years ago came to the knowledge about sundown that her only child was lost. They lived near a very large swampy section of the country, and she thought, "If that child of mine is in that swamp, there's no telling whether I'll ever see him any more." And she began to send the news around. She did not wait for someone to come and interrogate her; she started from house to house, until she gathered together a band of more than three hundred men and women. And they did not have to be persuaded, you know. Just as soon as that mother heart went out to them, each man got him a lantern and started. They made a drive through that great swamp. All the night long they were marching, marching, marching, through mud and water and cold, looking here and there and there—until, about sunrise, mother heard the child cry, and I need not tell the rest of that story. If that mother were here this afternoon, and I should ask her to stand up and tell this audience how Jesus felt that day when He laid aside all of Heaven, and came down to this world of sin, to

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seek and to save that which was lost, I think she could make a much better job of it than I am making to-day (Luke xix. 10).—
DR. LEN. G. BROUGHTON.

From the point of view of the window which serves to let in light upon the truth to be made clear, it is often better to use plain glass, a pure transparency that admits the white light without any stain of colour. Illustrations, however, are ornaments as well as windows, and it is sometimes legitimate to use an illustration largely for the sake of ornament, to relieve the tension of listening to a sustained argument, or the preacher introduces a bit of colour on to a surface that would otherwise be too much of a monotone. The ornamental illustration should, of course, be avoided if it will in any way distract attention from the argument or line of thought, but there is no necessary reason why light admitted through a coloured window should not illustrate a truth quite as clearly as light admitted through a colourless pane of glass. Milton tells of "storied windows richly dight," and an illustration may be such a storied window, that not only illumines the truth, but serves the purpose of attractive and ingrating ornament.

The preacher who uses the ornamental illustration needs, however, to be an artist, for nothing is more irritating than a bungling attempt to tell a story, or to indulge in allegory that will sound fustian unless the story is perfectly told, and the allegory is skilfully carried through. As examples of the extended ornamental and the allegorical illustration, take those that follow:—

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THE TEMPLE IN PARADISE

Let me remind you of that legend about the temple in Paradise. This record is not found in the Book, but to-day we know a great deal that is not there. Tradition says that there was a temple in Paradise for Adam and Eve to worship in. The place would certainly not be crowded ! But this temple was built of pearl, and was the most magnificent shrine that ever stood on this planet. The foundations were diamonds, and the dome was a mighty flashing sapphire. It was the most majestic temple the world has ever seen. But the story says that on the day when Adam sinned it fell into ruin and was strewn all over the planet. So the diamonds and pearls, the topaz and beryl, and all the rest of the precious stones found to-day are the remnants of the primitive shrine. There is a profound lesson under that legend. Through human sin and folly the temple of truth has been shattered, and in the creeds and philosophies of men of all nations you find the scattered remnants mixed with rubbish, yet shining in the dust. But on the day when our Lord stepped into our midst and said, "I am the Truth," we got the temple back in more than fabled splendour, let down from God out of Heaven. It makes all the difference whether you get the whole truth or only a bit of truth, a glittering speck of truth ; it is another thing when you get the whole redeeming truth set forth in the majestic figure which stands in the midst of the Christian revelation (John xiv. 6).—DR. W. L. WATKINSON.

DO THEY MISS US?

Once there gathered on a southern shore a group of men and women. They watched three small craft stand out to sea. They saw them vanish into the great and vast western ocean. Whether they passed into the Heaven above, whether they floated on the sea below, who could tell ? And many a time amid western isles Columbus and his men thought, Do they miss us at home ? Do they think of us as still living amid these western isles ? When they returned as men from death, what did they return to ? To love, to home, to all that meant for them fame and immortality. So often on earth we think of our loved dead, now floating on earth, now passed into Heaven. Wherever they are, let us lift our hands and say, "Thou art still in the keeping of Him who says

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the first is the last. The will of God still remaineth the will that saves. Thou art in His eternal keeping. Has He not said, "I have the keys of death and of hell"? (Rev. i. 17—18).—DR. FAIRBAIRN.

EVERY SOUL ITS OWN JUDGE

A modern volume of sermons gives this Buddhist story to illustrate this text. The subject had lived wickedly, and became very ill and nigh unto death. In the fever he had a dream, and in this dream he was conducted through the under-world to the hall of justice in which the judges sat in curtained alcoves. He came opposite his judge, and was told to write his misdeeds upon a slate provided for that purpose. Sentence was then passed that he should be thrice struck by lightning for his sins. The curtain was then drawn back, and he faced his judge, to find there seated the very image of himself, and he realised that he had pronounced the verdict. He had unconsciously judged himself (Prov. viii. 36).—REV. ROCLIFFE MACKINTOSH.

The allegorical illustration has the advantage that the preacher can make it himself, with every detail of the allegory precisely adapted to the purpose it is designed to serve. The Miracle Play and "Morality" of the Middle Ages, with all their crudities, were very effective allegorical methods of presenting spiritual truth to the minds of the people, who could take in nothing that was not given concrete embodiment. Who can measure the influence of Bunyan's allegories in elucidating and popularising the Biblical theology of "grace abounding"? The allegory, however, needs skilful handling. Nothing is duller and flatter and more nauseating than a badly conducted allegory. The allegory should have the romance of the fairy tale, it should be realistic, it should excite curiosity and sustain attention, and it should be told with conviction and dramatic effect.

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The success on the stage of "Everyman" shows that dramatically presented allegory can be made as popular in our days as ever it was. Some of the best speakers to children make large use of the allegorical method. Addison, whose *Spectator* allegories are the best of their kind in our literature, says: "Allegories, when well chosen, are like so many tracks of light in a discourse, that make everything about them clear and beautiful; and noble metaphor, when it is placed to an advantage, casts a glory round it, and darts a lustre through a whole sentence."

Every preacher should be familiar with "The Pilgrim's Progress," and "The Holy War," and he will draw many a telling illustration from Bunyan's marvellous incarnation of the friends and foes of the Christian in his pilgrimage and warfare. Various uses of allegory are illustrated in the following examples:—

NEAR THE CROSS

Where has the sanctifying, hopeful comfort of the Church been found to-day? Not far away from the cross!

"As I saw in my dream that just as Christian came up to the cross his burden loosed from off his shoulders and fell from off his back, and began to tumble, and so continued to do until it came to the mouth of the sepulchre, where it fell in and I saw it no more. Then was Christian glad and lightsome, and said with a moving heart, 'He has given me rest by His sorrow and life by His death!'"

That is an experience to which a great number here can shout "Amen!"

But I will turn away from John Bunyan, who might be thought to be a very faithful witness to the power of his Lord, and I will turn to a little-frequented path, to Goethe, perhaps Goethe's masterpiece. Let me give you just a short extract from those wonderful "Confessions of a Beautiful Soul:"

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"I leaned on a little table beside me and I hid my tear-stained face in my hands, and who could ever express even in the dimmest way the experience that came to me then? A secret influence drew my soul to the cross where Jesus once expired, and which was an inward leaning—I cannot give it any other name—an inward leaning like that which draws the heart to its beloved in its absence. As my soul drew near to Him who became mine and died upon the cross, in that moment I knew what faith meant, and in that moment my spirit received a wholly new power of uplifting" (1 Cor. i. 23, 24).—REV. J. H. JOWETT, M.A.

CAPTAIN RESISTANCE

Man is not bound hand and foot as the slave of circumstances. He is able to assert himself, to resist, to fight and to conquer. Bunyan, in "The Holy War," tells how the city of Mansoul was besieged by Diabolus and his host. The city was garrisoned on behalf of King Shaddai and the king's son Immanuel. It was surrounded by a strong wall in which were five gates—Ear-gate, Eye-gate, Mouth-gate, Nose-gate, and Feel-gate. The city was impregnable against any siege if it refused even to parley with its crafty enemy. It possessed in Captain Resistance a man that Diabolus and his band more feared than they feared the whole town of Mansoul besides. Captain Resistance was strongly backed by Mr. Recorder, whose name was Conscience. It was only when Captain Resistance was killed in a parley from the wall with an arrow fired from an ambuscade that "poor Mansoul was wholly left naked of courage, nor had she now any heart to resist." The first thing that Diabolus did on taking possession of the town was to depose Mr. Recorder and to place a servant of his own in Mr. Recorder's place. What we have to do is to keep Captain Resistance alive, to keep Mr. Recorder in office, and then, when Diabolus comes and tells us, "You cannot do what is right; God expects too much of poor human nature," you can reply defiantly, "I can, because I am a man" (1 Pet. v. 8, 9).—H. JEFFS.

"THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS" UP TO DATE

I wonder how many of you have read a very clever and very keen satire upon religious life to-day, written by an American writer, Nathaniel Hawthorne, entitled "The Celestial Railroad."

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He tells us how once, in a dream, he visited the City of Destruction, and he found that now there had been opened from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City a railroad, and things were greatly changed, changed for the greater comfort and convenience of the pilgrims. Instead of the quaking morasses of the Slough of Despond there was good, firm ground. No pilgrim need carry his burden upon his back, there were arrangements made for relieving pilgrims from all such needless incumbrances. As for the Hill Difficulty, why, they had tunnelled it, and the Valley of Humiliation had been filled up with the *débris*. And when he reached Vanity Fair, he found that now, instead of the old feuds between the pilgrims and those that dwell in Vanity Fair, a perfectly good understanding had been arrived at. Trade was brisk between them that dwell there and the pilgrims. Nay, indeed, the Lord of the Town was himself the chief supporter of the railroad. It brought so much traffic to the place. And the chief nobles were the main stock-holders in the railroad. There was wisdom under the satire and deepest piercing truth that some of us would do well to take home unto ourselves. Nay, you know that the friendship of the world is enmity with God. Go to, go to, we say ; should not the Church and the world go into partnership ? Time was when the old distinction between the Church and the world had blood in it. It was real. For then things were black or they were white ; to-day they shade off into a sort of neutral grey, and now the wisest cannot tell where the world ends and the Church begins (James iv. 4).—DR. W. L. WATKINSON.

THE ANGEL OF MERCY

Somewhere there is recorded the legendary experience of some ancient mystic who early in his life turned from baseness and degradation to Christ and to sweetness and light. To him in the crisis of his repentance came the Angel of Mercy, who explained to him the things of Calvary and helped him to believe both that God was willing to forgive and that the Angel himself would bear away his sins for ever. The aged saint passed many years that were restful with the peace of a great forgiveness, but as he drew near to the hour of his dying, fear came upon him lest after all his misdeeds would be remembered against him. Even as he feared he was aware that the Death Angel was casting a shadow across

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his bed, and when he looked through dimmed eyes, lo ! the Angel of Death was his former friend, the Angel of Mercy. Together they went along that white road of time that leads to the City of God, and as they walked the great fear fell upon him again. He hardly dared to speak of what was in his heart because it showed such lack of faith, but at last his trembling voice faltered out, "O, Mercy, where did you bury my sins?" The Angel of Mercy, who was wise as well as tender, understood, and looked at him, and smiled, and said, "Is it thus with you, my brother? I have forgotten where I buried them, and the Father has long since ceased to remember that ever you sinned at all." This can be at the best but allegory, yet it is an allegory with a true soul of wonderful spiritual suggestion. If sadness by reason of recollected sin hinders the coming of the radiant mood, let us see God as what He is and know Him for a loving Father who has put the transgressions of the penitent far beyond the area of Divine remembrance (Isa. xliii. 25).—REV. J. G. STEVENSON.

THE THATCH AND THE MOSS

I have met a beautiful parable. "Dear moss," said the old thatch, "I am so old, so patched, so ragged, really I am quite unsightly. I wish you would come and cheer me up a little. You will hide my infirmities, and through your love and sympathy no finger of contempt or dislike will be pointed at me." "I come," said the moss; and it crept up and over and in and out till every flaw was hidden, and all was smooth and fair. Presently the sun shone out, and the old thatch looked glorious in its golden rays. "How beautiful the thatch looks!" cried one. "How beautiful the thatch looks!" cried another. "Ah!" said the old thatch, "rather let them say, 'How beautiful is the love of the moss which spreads itself and covers over my faults, and keeps the knowledge of them all to herself, by her own grace casting over me a beautiful garb of freshness and verdure!'" In every true friendship there must be much of the charity that covereth, concealing where it cannot help the minor imperfections (1 Cor. xiii. 7, 8).—DR. WAYLAND HOYT.

Very effective use can be made of Christian biography, and of the testimonies and confessions of spiritual men.

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Dr. Alexander Whyte is a master of this method of illustration, and so also is Rev. J. H. Jowett, M.A., two of whose illustrations follow:—

SUFFERING WITH CHRIST

There is a sentence in David Hill's biography—that rare, gentle, refined spirit who moved like a fragrance in his little part of China—a sentence which has burnt itself into the very marrow of my mind. Disorder had broken out, and one of the rioters seized a huge splinter of a smashed door and gave him a terrific blow on the wrist, almost breaking his arm. And how is it all referred to? "There is a deep joy in actually suffering physical violence for Christ's sake." That is all! It is a strange combination of words—suffering, violence, joy! And yet I remember the evangel of the apostle, "If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him," and I cannot forget that the epistle which has much to say about tribulation and loss, has most to say about rejoicing! (Col. i. 24).
—REV. J. H. JOWETT, M.A.

THE OPEN EYES

When I was preparing this sermon I took down from my shelves a volume of James Smetham's letters. James Smetham, never rich in this world's money, always poor, but the friend of Ruskin, and therefore unspeakably rich! And James Smetham was once asked by a friend to accompany him to Rome and Venice, and he answered his correspondent: "I ought to go with you to Rome, but my difficulty is to appreciate my own little back garden, our copper beech, our weeping ash, our little nailed-up rose tree, and twisting nailed-up creepers. My difficulty is to get all out of that. I think when I have finished with the back garden I will go as far as Rome!" In another letter he adds these wonderfully fine words: "I have just been down to the end of Church Street to get a blow before settling down for the night, and as I looked at the wild, wintry clouds I had a new feeling of immortality." My brothers, I would sooner have James Smetham's little back garden, with his appreciation of the copper beech, and the weeping ash, and the little rose tree, and the creepers, than all Whitaker Wright's great gardens and lakes with all their barbaric splendour, and yet be destitute of the power of appreciating the religious and æsthetic

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significance of the meanest flower that blows (Matt. xx. 32, 33).—
REV. J. H. JOWETT, M.A.

It should already have suggested itself to the reader that the preacher who is successfully to illustrate his sermons will have to take pains with his sermons. Illustrations do not grow on every bush, and they are not to be plucked and forced into use at a moment's notice. The hurriedly prepared sermon will lack illustration unless it be the sermon of the man who is always preparing himself, by reading, thinking, and observation, for any emergency. A man who keeps his mind full, who is always feeding his imagination, will have a store of illustrations laid up ready to be drawn upon, or that will spontaneously suggest themselves, when his heart is warmed and his brain is active, even in hasty preparation or in the inspiration of actual delivery. The sermons of the average preacher will be bare and bald of illustration unless he has had his text ready and his line of thought in his mind for a reasonable time before he goes into the pulpit to deliver the sermon. Henry Ward Beecher used to say that he had many sermons in various stages of preparation, like apples ripening in a drawer, and he never preached a sermon until it was ripe. The illustrations do not appear as a rule until the ripening stage has arrived. But then no preacher ought to enter the pulpit to feed the congregation with green fruit. If preaching is the absorbing passion of his life, if the burning and yearning desire of his heart is to influence and help the congregation, he will always be jotting down thoughts for sermons. He will always be on the look-out for suitable illustrations,

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and if he realises the value of the imaginative element in preaching, and subjects his imagination to intensive cultivation, he is not likely to have to complain of the scanty crop of illustrations that his imagination and his reading produce. His own interest in his subjects will be intensified by the illustrations that come to him, and his own enjoyment of his sermons—and nobody will grudge enjoyment to the man who preaches them—will be all the keener as he notices how the illustrations grip the congregation, arouse their attention, and drive home and fix his points in their minds. There may be preachers, of course, who are not imaginative men, whose method is the method of logic and calm appeal to reason, and to such men illustrations will rarely come; but there is much more latent imagination in the average preacher than even he himself suspects. It should be his ardent desire and his energetic determination to raise his imagination to its highest power. In the chapters that follow suggestions will be given that may help him to make his imagination a fruitful contributor to the interest and the impressiveness of his preaching.

CHAPTER III

BIBLE METHODS OF ILLUSTRATION

MUCH may be learned by the preacher of the art of illustration from the example of the Bible writers. The Orientals in all ages have been passionate lovers of stories and poetry, and their religious teachers have made large use of stories as vehicles of religious instruction and inspiration. He who "knoweth our frame and remembereth that we are dust" chose men to receive the revelations of His character and His will who were specially fitted to present those revelations in the forms that would commend them to the people of their times. The writers of the Old Testament especially were intensely impressionable men, of a vivid imagination, and much of their teaching is given in imaginative forms—that is, in the way of illustration. The Hebrew language peculiarly lends itself to the illustrative method. It is a language that loves the concrete rather than the abstract, a language of highly-coloured picture words. Read any Psalm, any chapter of Proverbs, the Book of Job, Ecclesiastes, or any of the prophets, and you will find that illustrations are as plentiful as blackberries on bramble bushes in October. Hosea, in his twelfth chapter, represents Yahweh as saying, "I have also spoken by the prophets, and I have multiplied visions and used similitudes by the ministry

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of the prophets." The visions and similitudes were pictures internally seen, and striking analogies, by which the prophets illustrated the revelations communicated to them. The preacher with imagination will find hundreds of short similitudes and thousands of picture-words that at once suggest illustrations. Take, for instance, Psalm lxxxv. What a dramatic picture of the New Testament gospel, already existing in germ in the Old Testament, we have in the figures—"Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven"!

The Old Testament illustrations are often similitudes beginning with an illustration and concluding with the truth illustrated. As examples of such illustrations we have these:—

"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God" (Ps. xlii. 1).

"He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us" (Ps. ciii. 10—12).

In verses 15 to 17 of Psalm ciii. we have an illustration in which the similitude emphasises a contrast:—

"As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children."

The "As—so's" of the Old Testament will furnish

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the preacher with a very pleasant and profitable study of the art of illustration by similitudes.

Amos, in chapters vii. and viii., gives a sequence of four illustrations, designed to impress on apostate and profligate Israel that it had worn out the patience even of long-suffering Yahweh, and that it was ripe, and rotten ripe, for chastisement. There is the invasion of the grasshoppers that devour the aftermath, the fire that licks up the waters of the great deep, the picture of Yahweh standing on a wall with a plumb-line measuring the wall for destruction, and the basket of summer fruit that typifies that the time of the ingathering of the ripened harvest of the "fruits of the flesh" has arrived. Amos, Micah and Hosea are particularly worth studying for the realism of their illustrations drawn from common life. They were men of the people and they use the language of the people and illustrations that appeal to the common man. It is very interesting to notice how Amos the herdsman and cultivator of sycamores uses illustrations that are racy of the soil, drawn from his intimate knowledge of agricultural and shepherd life. He makes Yahweh say, "Behold, I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves." And surely we have a vivid reminiscence in the picture, "Thus saith Yahweh: As the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear; so shall the children of Israel be taken out that dwell in Samaria in the corner of a bed, and in Damascus in a couch." So to-day the farm labourer local preacher will use illustrations that smack of the good brown earth and have in them the perfume of the hay

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field, and the fisherman preacher will ozonise his sermons with illustrations of experiences on sea and shore.

The Old Testament sometimes gives us illustrations in the shape of fables or parables. In Judges ix. 7—15 Jotham rebukes Abimelech and his followers with a notable fable.

“The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive tree, ‘Reign thou over us.’ But the olive tree said unto them, ‘Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?’ And the trees said to the fig tree, ‘Come thou and reign over us.’ But the fig tree said unto them, ‘Should I forsake my sweetness and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees?’ Then said the trees unto the vine, ‘Come thou and reign over us.’ And the vine said unto them, ‘Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?’ Then said all the trees unto the bramble, ‘Come thou and reign over us.’ And the bramble said unto the trees, ‘If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow; and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon.’”

Nathan the prophet brought David's sin home to him in 2 Samuel xii. 1—4 by a parable. It is worth noting that Nathan left David himself to make the application, and that the point was sharp and pierced him to the heart is shown by the statement that “David's anger was greatly kindled against the man.”

The major prophets—Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel—are very rich in exquisitely beautiful illustrations, and illustrations of wonderful force and aptness in driving home their teaching. When Isaiah, for instance, had to deliver a crushing rebuke to Judah for its forgetfulness of God, and to prophesy the punishment which that forgetfulness was destined to bring upon Yahweh's

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favoured but faithless people, he used an illustration that is unsurpassed in the Old Testament for beauty and point, the

SONG OF THE VINEYARD

Now will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My well-beloved hath a vineyard on a very fruitful hill. And he fenced it and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vines, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein; and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? And now go to: I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down; and I will lay it waste; it shall not be pruned, or digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant; and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

This illustration of Isaiah's is in many ways a model illustration. It is drawn from one of the most familiar sights of the country, the vineyard. It is exquisite in its beauty; it is marvellously compact; it illustrates exactly the things Isaiah wanted to impress, and it does not confuse by the introduction of superfluous details; at once it excites interest, it arouses curiosity, it stimulates imagination, and it artfully postpones the "moral" until the story is completed. It carried the consent of the hearer with it, and made the hearer condemn himself in his own case.

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There are many illustrations in Isaiah which the preacher can study with the greatest profit and which should give him many a hint that he could put to good use. Isaiah, in predicting the downfall of Babylon, Chapters xiii. and xiv., might have contented himself with simply saying that the power of the king of Babylon should be broken, and that his pride should be punished by the ruin of his empire. He uses, however, in his great ode, one of the most audacious and most unforgettable illustrations in literature—that in which he pictures the scene in Hades when the humiliated tyrant of the East is received and taunted by the dwellers in the under-world.

Thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, "How hath the oppression ceased! the golden city ceased! The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptres of the rulers. He who smote the people in wrath, with a continual stroke; he that ruled the kingdoms in anger, is persecuted and none hindereth. The whole earth is at rest and is quiet; they break forth into singing. Yea, the fir trees rejoice at thee, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying, "Since thou art laid down, no feller is come up against us." Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming. It stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth: it has raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall speak and say unto thee, "Art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us? And thy pomp is brought down to the grave and the noise of thy viols, the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning; how art thou cast down to the ground which didst weaken the nations. For as thou hast said in thine heart, 'I will ascend into Heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the earth. I will ascend above the height of the clouds; I will be like the most High,' yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon

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thee, and consider thee, saying, 'Is this the man who made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms ; that made the world as a wilderness and destroyed the cities thereof ; that opened not the house of his prisoners ?' All the kings of the nations, even all of them lie in glory, every one in his own house. But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit : as a carcase trodden under feet. Prepare slaughter for his children for the iniquity of their fathers, that they do not rise nor possess the land, nor fill the face of the world with cities."

When we come to the New Testament we come to Him who "without a parable spake not unto them." It is the illustrations of Jesus that have done most to commend His teaching to the common people. And how simple, and apparently how commonplace, His illustrations usually are ! A story is told in half-a-dozen sentences and "on the stretched forefinger of old Time it glitters for ever," and for ever teaches its unforgettable lesson to an eagerly listening world.

THE HOUSES ON ROCK AND SAND

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man which built his house upon a rock : and the rain descended, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand : and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house ; and it fell ; and great was the fall thereof."

THE RICH FOOL

"The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully : and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits ? And he said, This will I do : I will pull down my barns, and build greater ; and there will

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I bestow all my fruit and my goods. And I will say unto my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall these things be, which thou hast provided?"

What knells of doom are the words in these parables: "And it fell"! and "But God said unto him"!

Luke xv., with its sequence of Parables of the Lost Things, is a most striking example of Christ's use of the cumulative method of illustration. In the Parable of the Lost Sheep we have the yearning love of the shepherd who cannot rest with a great flock when a single one is missing. In the Parable of the Lost Piece of Silver we have an illustration of the determination to find a lost thing of comparatively small value, and of what seems like disproportionate joy over its recovery; but the piece of silver stands for the soul of man, and the heavenly treasury would be the poorer if a single soul were missing. In the Parable of the Prodigal Son, which has so deeply touched the heart of the world and brought countless prodigals out of "the far country," we have a composite illustration dramatically picturing to us the feelings of the sinner who has discovered his folly, of the self-righteous whose life has been formally correct but whose heart is cold towards the strayed and fallen, and of the father who keeps an ever open door to the wild and wanton boy, who cannot exile himself from the father's heart however he may exile himself from the father's home and reject his authority. All are illustrations of the tireless love of God, of His unwearying resolve to save the sinner from himself, of the "joy in heaven" when the "lost is found," and

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“the dead is alive again,” but what a Divine miniature masterpiece each story is, and how they complement each other by their differences in likeness—the subtle differences of children who are all like their father and mother!

One other illustration of Jesus only can here be quoted, for the sake of the comparison with Isaiah’s “Song of the Vineyard,” to which it is a Gospel pendant.

CHRIST’S PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD

“Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country; and when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord, therefore, of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner; this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof” (Matt. xxi. 33—43).

The illustrations of Jesus are never “literary” in the sense of being deliberate artistic creations. They are the impromptus of the preacher whose eyes and ears

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are open to everything that is going on about Him, and who finds God in everything. The parables are wild-flowers that spring up in the Gospel soil, and wildflowers that by their unstudied beauty have never ceased to charm and make their simple appeal to the heart. The best illustrations, like the best songs, are not the fruits of effort, but the fruits of the deeply stirred heart that is in tune with Nature and with God.

A word should be said about the illustrations of Paul. He is not the poet but the theologian, the strenuous thinker ; but he is in dead earnest, and he knows the value of illustrations. The Isthmian Games gave him such illustrations as this from running:— “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended ; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Perhaps from the boxing contests in the same games he got the illustration in 2 Timothy, when the candle of his life has burnt to the socket : “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith : henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.”

From the familiar spectacle of the Roman soldiers he gathered such illustrations as that of “the whole armour of God” and “who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? ”

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It may well be that from the marble temples of Athens, Corinth and Ephesus he drew the illustration in Ephesians ii. 19—22 :—

“Now therefore, ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God ; and are built upon the foundations of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone ; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into a holy temple in the Lord ; in whom also ye are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”

Speaking humanly, had the Bible been given in the dry forms of pure theology it could never have become the book of universal humanity in all its varieties, in every stage of civilisation and class of society, the book of old and young, of men and women, the book of the disinherited of the earth, of the philosopher, and of the old woman who painfully spells out its words in her cottage. The illustrations make it a living book, throbbing with “red-veined humanity,” and the preacher who would convey its messages should study to convey them by the illustrative methods that are so splendidly exemplified in the Bible books. Those methods, well managed, have never failed, and never will fail ; for the heart of the world is the child’s heart that is always pleading for a story.

CHAPTER IV

THE ILLUSTRATIVE USE OF FICTION

THE library of the preacher should be well stocked with works of imagination. If he reads the best novels, the best plays, the best poetry, always with an eye to the enrichment of his sermons, he will not only be cultivating his own imagination, but he will be continually drawing treasure trove out of the imaginative creations of men and women who have studied human nature sympathetically, and have reproduced human nature in vivid transcripts in their works. The common fault of the preacher is to devote his reading too exclusively to Biblical and theological works. He ought, of course, to spare no pains in making himself familiar with the text of the Bible, in getting an intelligent understanding of the meaning and messages of the Bible books, as they were written by men of their times to the men of their times, and as they convey Divine revelation to the men of all times. It is well that he should have a consistent and convincing theology rooted in the personality, the self-sacrificial life, the inspiring example, the teaching and the crowning sacrifice on Calvary of Him who is the summit and the completion of the revelation of the Old Testament, and the Light and the Life of the world. But the preacher, if he is to touch the human heart, if he is to

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convey the messages of the Bible and the Gospel to the average man, must be also a keen and sympathetic student of human nature. He must know how to get into his sermons those touches of Nature that make the whole world kin. Any one man or woman is an epitome of the race. The joys and sorrows of one are the joys and sorrows of all. All human hearts are in relationship to each other. The inspired novelist, the inspired dramatist, the inspired poet in his creations, studies human life under all conditions and circumstances, and gives us living pictures in which, so far as they are living, we recognise ourselves as we should or might be under similar circumstances and conditions. The popularity of novels and plays is due largely to this self-identification of the reader, or the spectator, with the characters who play their parts in the story or the drama. We ourselves are the hero, the lover, and, though we would not admit it to anybody else, we are also the villain. The novelist, the dramatist, and the poet present to us people of every class, of every temperament, of every country; but there is always the common human heart. Their works are mirrors of human nature. Our own environment is a narrow one. We live and move in our own limited circle. The imaginative creators take us out of our circle and enlarge our experience of life. They go deep down into the heart, and show us the comedies and the tragedies that are always working themselves out where good and evil are in conflict for the mastery of a soul. Of course there are novelists and novelists, dramatists and dramatists, poets and poets, and their pictures of

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life are coloured by their own temperament and their own peculiar outlook on life; but these varieties of temperament and outlook only add to the human interest of the pictures, for the authors are revealing themselves as well as revealing the humanity they study and transcribe. John Bunyan, in "The Pilgrim's Progress" and "The Holy War," is giving us dramas of the pilgrimage and the warfare of his own soul, but it is also the pilgrimage and the warfare of all other souls. Milton, in "Paradise Lost," was painting in Adam and Eve not only our first parents, but all their sons and daughters. They were novelist and dramatist as much as Walter Scott and Shakespeare. Every story and every play is really a drama, allegorical or realistic, of the human soul. The preacher who appreciates this and reads fiction, drama and poetry for revelations of the human heart will never lack illustrations, though, of course, he should be always himself a student of human life and always creating illustrations of his own out of what he finds in the human nature of the people among whom he lives and moves.

Such novels as those of George Eliot, in which characters are created directly from life by a creator with a wonderful intuition of the workings of the human heart, and with a wonderful power of identifying herself sympathetically with the characters she creates, are rich treasure-houses of materials for illustration. Take "Adam Bede," for instance: what a variety of human character and experience is brought before us in that story! The man who believed in the gospel of work,

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simple-hearted, strong, with deep human affection; the weak-willed, hot-blooded Hetty Sorrel, more sinned against than sinning, the victim of passion driven like a dried leaf in an autumn gust to her doom; the young squire, as weak of will, who plays with fire, sins greatly and repents bitterly when it is too late; the inimitable Mrs. Poyser, sharp of tongue but kindly of heart, a model housewife, who rules with a strong hand, a type of the English home-maker who has made the English home the world over the symbol of domestic comfort—all these are more or less ourselves drawn by the brush of a master artist. The preacher who reads such works gets an insight into human nature which will enable him to make his sermons intensely human, and he will draw from such studies illustrations that will go straight to the hearts of his hearers as reproductions and revelations of their own intimate experience.

It is not only the classic creator of works of imagination, however, who will supply the preacher with splendid and telling illustrations. There are many transcribers of life who are none the less faithful transcribers because they are not endowed with genius of the first order. Any observant student of life who pictures what he has seen and felt in his studies of humanity is contributing to the illustrative resources of the pulpit. Novelists of to-day can often be drawn upon with profit, all the more so because their names and their works are familiar to men in the congregation, and because they are transcribing life in its various aspects and in various conditions of their

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own time. The use that may be made of imaginative literature in sermon illustration is shown in the examples that follow, some taken from sermons and some from recently published books.

REST IN SACRIFICE

In that marvellous story of "Kim," the lad, overborne by strain, fatigue, and the weight beyond his years, broke down and sobbed at the feet of the aged man for whom he begged in the dawn, held the weary head on his lap during the noonday heats, fanned away the flies during the heat till his wrist ached, begged again in the evenings, and rubbed the tired, aged feet at night. But what blessedness it meant to the young heart ! Did he ever count the cost of the travail and labour which he bore day after day through their memorable trudge amid the plains of India? And who could estimate his joy when the old man said gently : "Thou hast never stepped a hair's breadth from the Way of Obedience. Child, I have lived on thy strength as an old tree lives on the lime of a new wall. Therefore, not through any sin of thine art thou weakened. Be comforted." That is only a story told by a master hand, but it is true to the deepest life. The soul forgets weariness, privation, pain—all, if only it may give itself to the one it loves (2 Cor. xii. 9, 10).—REV. F. B. MEYER, B.A.

CHRIST THE COMPANION

In the Styrian highlands there lived a peasant who was nicknamed "The Pair." He gained the name through his curious conduct. He was a well-to-do landowner, had a family, a large number of servants, numerous friends, and yet he was scarcely ever seen in society. He always went about alone, and yet not alone. When he walked along the road, he always took the worst, the rough or wet path, so that the good path on his right remained free, as if for a companion, whom he wished to honour. And yet no one was ever seen walking by his side. At home, at every meal, a special cover was laid in the place of honour ; it consisted of white china, and silver which had always to be bright and clean. The large table was well filled, the father sat at the top, but the place on his right hand remained empty. And yet the peasant

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leaned respectfully to that side as if a distinguished guest sat there. After dinner the food set before the invisible guest was given to the poor.

It was on account of this companionship with an invisible being that the peasant was called "The Pair." If he was asked what it meant, he either made no reply or said mysteriously: "But He is there." It was well known whom he meant—the Lord Jesus. The man took the bad path out of love and honour to Him, out of love and honour to Him a place was set at the table; and whether he was at work or taking his rest, he was always calm and cheerful, and behaved as if he were in company with another, a person of distinction, whom no one ever saw. Before he had attained a great age, the man fell mortally sick. Then a chair was placed by his bedside, and he put out his arm as if he were holding someone's hand and carried on a low-toned conversation with the invisible occupant of the chair. When he was dead, no one ventured to move the chair from the bedside. His grave in the churchyard was near a white marble monument representing the Good Shepherd. And as the peasant's coffin sank into the earth it seemed to me as I stood there that a white light gleamed into the open grave from the figure of the Good Shepherd, shining brilliantly in the sun.

And this peasant was one who was happy upon earth in the belief of Jesus Christ (Rev. iii. 20).—PETER ROSEGGGER ("My Kingdom of Heaven").

GOD'S MYSTERIOUS WAY

"Ah, Davy, the ways o' God is strange. He manages somehow t' work a blessin' with death an' wreck. 'I'm awful sorry for they poor children,' says He, 'an' for the owners o' that there fine ship; but I got t' have My way,' says He, 'or the world would never come t' much; so down goes the ship,' says He, 'an' up comes that dear mother t' My bosom. 'Tis no use tellin' them why,' says He, 'for they wouldn't understand. An', ecod!' says He, 'while I'm about it I'll just put it in the mind o' that doctor-man t' stay right there an' do a day's work or two for Me.' I'm sure He meant it—I'm sure He meant to do just that—I'm sure 'twas all done o' purpose. We thinks He's hard an' a bit free an' careless. Ecod! they's times when we thinks He fair bungles His job. He

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kills us, an' He cripples us, an' He starves us, an' He hurts our hearts ; an' then, Davy, we says He's a dunderhead at runnin' a world, which, says we, we could run a sight better, if we was able t' make one. But the Lord, Davy, does His day's work in a seamanlike way, usin' no more crooked backs an' empty stomachs an' children's tears an' broken hearts than He can help. 'Tis little we knows about what He's up to. An' 'tis wise, I'm thinkin', not t' bother about tryin' t' find out. 'Tis better t' let Him steer His own course an' ask no questions. I just *knowed* He was up t' something grand. I said so, Davy ! 'Tis just like the hymn, lad, about His hidin' a smilin' face behind a frownin' Providence. Ah, Davy, He'll take care o' *we* !" (Mark vii. 37).—NORMAN DUNCAN (" Doctor Luke").

INTO THE SUNSHINE

My mother turned her face from us. She trembled, once, and sighed, and then lay very quiet. I knew in my childish way that her hope had fled with ours—that, now, remote from our love and comfort—alone—all alone—she had been brought face to face with the last dread prospect. There was the noise of rain on the panes, and wind without, and the heavy tread of Skipper Tommy's feet, coming up the stair, but no other sound. But Skipper Tommy, entering now, moved a chair to my mother's bedside, and laid a hand on hers, his old face illuminated by his unfailing faith in the glory and wisdom of his God.

"Hush !" he said. "Don't you go gettin' scared at—the thing that's coming—t' you. 'Tis nothin' t' fear," he went on, gloriously confident. "'Tis not hard, I'm sure—the Lord's too kind for that. He just lets us think it is, so He can give us a lovely surprise, when the time comes. Oh, no, 'tis not *hard* ! 'Tis but like wakin' t' the sunlight of a new, clear day. Ah, 'tis a pity us all can't wake with you t' the beauty o' the morning ! But the dear Lord is kind. There comes an end to all the dreamin'. He takes our hand. 'The day is broke,' says He. 'Dream no more, but rise, child o' Mine, and come into the sunshine with Me.' 'Tis only that that's comin' t' you—only His gentle touch—an' the wakin'. Hush ! Don't you go gettin' scared. 'Tis a lovely thing—that's comin' t' you !"

"I'm not afraid," my mother whispered, turning. "I'm not

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afraid, Skipper Tommy. But I'm sad—oh, I'm sad—to have to leave——”

She looked tenderly upon me (Rev. xxi. 4).—NORMAN DUNCAN (“Doctor Luke”).

THE POISONED WELLS

The man who agitates for any particular reform must always be prepared to meet, not only with the hostility of those who will be hurt and sacrificed for the good of the community, but also with the indifference of the mass of people who will acquiesce with them. Perhaps there never has been a finer illustration of the difficulty that besets the agitator than that which the keen-sighted critic of society, Henrik Ibsen, gave in his play, “An Enemy of the People.” Some of you are familiar with that remarkable story. You know how in a little Norwegian town there is a doctor whose brother is burgomaster of the town. The doctor is anxious for the town's real prosperity, and that prosperity depends upon some baths which he himself originally suggested. It is found, however, that the people who bathe in the baths are attacked by all sorts of dreadful diseases. The water is analysed and is discovered to be simply crowded with poisonous infusions, owing to the water coming from a disease-laden swamp, poisoning the baths at their source. The doctor, being a simple-minded man and a lover of truth, and not a practical man and a lover of compromise, stands out in that little community as a great agitator. His brother is disgusted with him. Finally he is called “the enemy of the people.” “The source is poisoned, man! Are you mad?” cries the doctor. “The whole of our flourishing social life is rooted in a lie!” The burgomaster answers, “Idle fancies, or worse. The man who makes such offensive insinuations against his native place must be an enemy of the people!” (1 Kings xviii. 17).—REV. J. E. RATTENBURY.

THE SAVING POWER OF LOVE

There is a book which I should like to make you all read, if I could, written by that brilliant novelist, Mr. Anthony Hope—the book that is called “The Intrusions of Peggy.” It is the story of a miser, the story of a man who gradually lost his soul through the love of gold, and the accumulation of money. He had a great safe in his room. He was believed to be poor, because he lived so

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poorly, but in that safe he gradually piled up documents that entitled him to property here, there, and everywhere, and only one man knew how rich a man he was. And there came into his home, and into his life, this young girl, with the perfectly unselfish and disinterested soul, who was willing to give everything that she possessed away, in order that she might help another and bless another; and gradually this Christ-like influence broke him down with shame, melted his heart, until at last he began to propose to himself a veritable crucifixion, that he too should begin to live for the sake of others, that he too should take up the life of the Cross in order that he might be saved from this body of death and know the meaning of that life which is life indeed. He had everything, humanly speaking, that men seek for most. All power was his, and yet he had missed the secret of life, because until love came into his very soul, and he saw the love of God and man, he did not realise what life means, and what life is given for (John x. 10).—REV. C. SILVESTER HORNE, M.A.

"WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT A MAN?"

G. F. Watts's great picture in the Tate Gallery of the "Rich Young Ruler" is an excellent illustration of this text. The young man who clung to the material in life when Christ called him to embrace the spiritual is portrayed in this picture—"For he had great possessions"—with singular force. The head is bowed, the face turned from view, but Watts, with his genius for "expression in the back," imparts a world of sadness into the slack, bent shoulders of the young man who found the sacrifice of his wealth too great even to save his soul. An even grander illustration of this text is to be found in Paul Neumann's newly published novel, "Dominy's Dollars." Dominy is a young Jew in the New York ghetto. He is an orphan, cared for by a Jewish family from Poland. Dominy dreams of untold wealth—his goal is riches beyond dreams of avarice. The business instinct of his race is strong in him, and first in a stockbroker's office, then as a speculator on options, and finally as a buyer of virgin forest lands, he piles up fabulous wealth. He comes to England, and while in the midst of his early prosperity with his dreams within realisation he meets again one of the daughters of the Polish Jew family who had befriended him in his ghetto days. She has become the

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greatest operatic singer of her day. The world is at her feet, but while sojourning in Paris with Roman Catholic friends she had become a convert to Christ. She read the story of the rich young ruler, and though she had the finest voice in Europe she came to see that its possession was her curse, and that she should renounce it. Dominy, who had loved her when they were boy and girl in the ghetto, proposes marriage. She agrees—on conditions. She will renounce her art and abandon the stage if Dominy will abandon his ambition to be the richest man in the world. He is already rich. All night long Dominy wrestles with the alternatives. On the one hand love and happiness ; on the other the possibilities of untold wealth and all the power that goes with wealth. He reads the Gospel story of Christ's interview with the rich young ruler, and resents what he thinks was Christ's unjust demand for renunciation. At last Dominy decides. He must pursue his career—he must renounce his love. The opera singer goes into a convent. Dominy goes on piling up millions upon millions, hardening as he lives his loveless life and finds that what he had sold his soul and his love to gain brought neither happiness nor regard. He suffers from insomnia, has recourse to drugs to induce sleep, becomes physically depressed and mentally distraught. Driven to desperation, he seeks change and rest ; but returns to renewed insomnia and depression. Tidings reach him of the death of the girl whose love he had bartered for his wealth. The end is tragedy—suicide off the rocks of Guernsey. He had gained the whole world, had realised his vision of wealth beyond dreams of avarice, but had lost his own soul (Matt. xvi. 26 ; Mark viii. 36).—ARTHUR PORRITT.

PETERKIN'S PUDDING

"The proof of the pudding is in the eating," says the proverb, but there is a good deal in what you put into the pudding. People complain that religion is insipid, that they get little out of it ; but what have they put into it? They have grudged the expense, and yet they expect the blessing. A cheap religion, like most cheap things, is of little value. "Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and follow Me." "Give and it shall be given unto you." To those who try to be Christians on the cheap, let me commend Mr. Zangwill's tale of Peterkin's pudding.

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"You never heard of Peterkin's pudding," says Mr. Zangwill, "but there is a fine moral baked in it. Johannes came to his wife one day and said, 'Liebes Gretchen, could you not make me a pudding such as Peterkin is always boasting his wife makes him? I am dying of envy to taste it. Every time he talks of it my chops water.' 'It is not impossible I could make you one,' said Gretchen good-naturedly. 'I will go and ask Frau Peterkin how she makes it.' When Johannes returned that evening from the workshop, where Peterkin had been raving more than ever over his wife's pudding, Gretchen said gleefully, 'I have been to Frau Peterkin. She has a good heart and she gave me the whole recipe for Peterkin's pudding.' Johannes rubbed his hands, and his mouth watered already with anticipation. 'It is made with raisins,' began Gretchen. Johannes' jaw fell. 'We can scarcely afford raisins,' he interrupted; 'couldn't you manage without raisins?' 'Oh, I daresay,' said Gretchen doubtfully. 'There is also candied lemon peel.' Johannes whistled. 'Ach! we can't run to that,' he said. 'No, indeed,' assented Gretchen; 'but we must have suet and yeast.' 'I don't see the necessity,' quoth Johannes. 'A good cook like you'—here he gave her a sounding kiss—'can get along without such trifles as those.' 'Well, I will try,' said the good Gretchen, as cheerfully as she could; and so next morning Johannes went to work lighthearted and gay. When he returned home, lo! the long desired dainty stood on the supper table, beautifully brown. He ran to embrace his wife in gratitude and joy; then he tremblingly broke off a hunch of pudding and took a huge bite. His wife, anxiously watching his face, saw it assume a look of perplexity, followed by one of disgust. Johannes gave a great snort of contempt. 'Liebes Gott!' he cried, 'And this is what Peterkin is always bragging about!'" (Matt. xvi. 24, 25; also Luke vi. 38).

OUR DAILY BREAD

I hope, friend, you and I are not too proud to ask for our daily bread, and to be grateful for getting it? Mr. Philip had to work for his in care and trouble, like other children of men—to work for it, and I hope to pray for it too. It is a thought to me awful and beautiful, that of our daily prayer and of myriads of fellow-men uttering it, in care and in sickness, in doubt and in poverty, in health and in wealth. *Panem nostrum da nobis hodie.* Philip

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whispers it by the bedside, where wife and child lie sleeping, and goes to his early labour with a stouter heart ; as he creeps to his rest, when the day's labour is over, and the quotidian bread is earned, he breathes his hushed thanks to the bountiful Giver of his meal. All over this world what an endless chorus is singing of love, and thanks and prayer ! Day tells to day the wondrous story, and night recounts it unto night. How do I come to think of a sunrise which I saw near twenty years ago on the Nile, when the river and sky flushed with the dawning light and, as the luminary appeared, the boatmen knelt on the rosy deck and adored Allah ? So, as the sun rises, friend, over the humble housetops round about your home, shall you wake many and many a day to duty and labour. May the task have been honestly done when the night comes ; and the Steward deal kindly with the labourer (Matt. vi. 11). —W. M. THACKERAY ("The Story of Philip").

One incidental gain to the preacher of the reading of good fiction is that it will teach him the art of telling a story well, and will generally liven up his pulpit style. The style of the preacher whose reading is mainly homiletical and theological tends to a grey monotony. It lacks picture words and vivid phrases that strike the hearer's imagination and linger in his memory. The preacher, of all public speakers, should be the most human and dramatic, for no speaker deals so much and so directly with subjects of the most vital import to his audiences. His theme is life in its myriad manifestations—life as it sinks to the deepest depths and rises to the loftiest heights, life ruined and life redeemed, the thrilling soul dramas of humanity, the blighting shadows and the glorious sunshine. All comedy and all tragedy are his to deal with. He deals with death also—the "death of the righteous" and the death of the man who has "missed the mark." He deals with what lies beyond the grave—at any rate, he should be prepared to

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deal with "the four last things," though most preachers in these days shrink from peering beyond the veil. But death is always there, at the end of life, and while guarding against "other-worldliness," over-curious prying into the mysteries of the beyond, the preacher is bound to impress on his congregation that this life does not last for ever, that it is an opportunity to be used "while it is called to-day," and that it should be used in training the soul for its future destiny, so that when the time comes for "meeting the Pilot face to face" there shall be no bankrupt's account to render of talents wasted, of suffering brethren unhelped, of nothing done to realise the prayer, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." With such themes, and all life to draw upon, the preacher should find it an impossibility to be dull and drab, dry and flavourless; but too many congregations know to their cost that the seeming impossibility is often accomplished. The judicious reader and user of fiction will learn how to recreate dramatic episodes of the Bible, to put the men and women of the Bible before the congregation as they lived and moved, to introduce local colour, and to make the congregation realise that there is no more intensely human and thrillingly dramatic book in literature than the Bible. From the literature of imagination and from his own observation and imagination he will present striking parallels to the Bible characters, for these characters stand out as eternal types of universal humanity. The characters themselves will become more real as the preacher, by modern illustrations, demonstrates the fidelity of the portraiture of the inspired artists.

CHAPTER V

THE PREACHER AMONG THE POETS

THE preacher is wise who spends much time in the company of the poets, for various reasons. His familiarity with the poets will enable him the better to understand the poetical books of the Old Testament. Much mischief has been done by the dull, prosaic, literal interpretation of highly poetical expressions. Figures of speech have been commented upon, and systems based upon them, as if they were statements of hard fact. Poetry further gives the preacher a sense of the colour and music of words, it awakens what latent poetry there may be in his own soul, it refines his thought and expression and gives wings to his imagination. The poets are themselves preachers and prophets, and their method of preaching is largely the method of illustration. The poet is often the seer, the watchman on the tower, who stands above the crowd and the dust and the noise of the streets, and sees and hears things that are invisible and inaudible to those engaged in the rough-and-tumble of the struggle for existence. He is the voice of the best thought and aspiration of the crowd. Who like Milton interpreted what was loftiest and most enduring in the Puritanism of the seventeenth century? Who like Wordsworth, Tennyson and Browning interpreted the nineteenth century to itself

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and to all future ages? They were the prophets who purged its thought of all that was vulgar, frivolous, and temporary, and set to music what was noblest and most divine in the hearts and minds of its deepest and purest thinkers. The supreme poets have always been deeply religious men, for only to the man whose heart is pure comes "the vision and the faculty divine" that makes the poet whose name is to be enrolled among the classics.

Among the poets the preacher in search of illustrations will find rich material, but it needs a skilful hand to use the material wisely in preaching. The preacher may take a poem that is a story, and tell the story in his own way. In Browning and in Tennyson there are many stories that are really parables, or easily convertible into parables, on which the preacher can lay a reverent hand. Here, for instance, is how one preacher utilises the story of "Enoch Arden."

THE BURNT-OFFERING AND THE SONG

One of the most beautiful things I know in Tennyson's works is the story of Enoch Arden. The sailor goes away and does not return for years: his wife meanwhile marries again and has children; and when Enoch Arden comes again to the little fishing port he hears the story in the inn from the garrulous landlady, and one evening steals up to see. He hides himself in the gloaming, so that he can watch Philip and the queen of his heart. How happy they are, and how Philip takes the boy upon his knee, and what perfect peace and joy reign there! If he were to show himself he would shatter it with a blow. But he abstains, and after waiting a little wistfully he goes back to the village and hides himself; but Tennyson says he was not all unhappy, but, just as in the briny sea there are fountains of pure, sweet water that rise up perennially, so amid the brine of his unutterable grief there rose up joy, pure

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and blessed, that crowned all, and when the burnt-offering began the song of the Lord began (2 Chron. xxix. 27).—REV. HARRIS LLOYD.

Often the preacher, instead of taking a poetical story and telling it in his own way, will quote a passage; and congregations like such quotations in illustration of a point, if they are beautiful, well chosen, and do really serve the purpose of illustration. What congregations resent is the tinsel use often made of passages of poetry that are worn threadbare in the pulpit. Such use suggests that the preacher owes all his poetry to some "Dictionary of Quotations," or volume of "Elegant Extracts," or that he has cut out and treasured bits that he has found in other men's sermons. Poetry is not to be used just as ribbons and rosettes to decorate the preacher's prose, but must be used with taste and intelligence, for the definite purpose of lighting up a point and commending it by the poet's perfect illustration of the truth in his own way. It often happens that a poet gives us his own rendering of an incident or a passage of Scripture, and the preacher dealing with that incident or passage can make very effective use of the poem. Tennyson, for instance, in "In Memoriam," makes exquisite use of the Bible, in a poem that is itself a theology of Christian consolation. John's doctrine of the "Word" is put in stanzas which teach that God, in His infinite condescension, reveals Himself to humanity by an incarnate illustration of His love.

" For Wisdom dealt with mortal powers,
Where truth in closest words shall fail
When truth embodied in a tale
Shall enter in at lowly doors.

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“And so the Word had breath, and wrought
With human hands the creed of creeds
In loveliness of perfect deeds,
More strong than all poetic thought ;
“Which he may read that binds the sheaf,
Or builds the house, or digs the grave,
And those wild eyes that watch the wave
In roarings round the coral reef” (John i. 1).

A few sections earlier, in “In Memoriam,” we have a lovely imaginative representation of the return to his sister’s house of Lazarus, after his calling from the tomb :—

“When Lazarus left his charnel cave,
And home to Mary’s house return’d,
Was this demanded—if he yearn’d
To hear her weeping by his grave?
“‘Where wert thou, brother, those four days?’
There lives no record of reply,
Which telling what it is to die
Had surely added praise to praise.
“From every house the neighbours met,
The streets were fill’d with joyful sound,
A solemn gladness even crown’d
The purple brows of Olivet.
“Behold a man raised up by Christ!
The rest remaineth unreveal’d ;
He told it not ; or something seal’d
The lips of that Evangelist ” (John xii. 2).

Illustrations of Scripture passages or incidents by other poets follow :—

“At the Devil’s booth are all things sold,
Each ounce of dross costs its ounce of gold ;
For a cap and bells our lives we pay,
Bubbles we buy with a whole soul’s tasking :
’Tis Heaven alone that is given away,
’Tis only God may be had for the asking.”
(Isa. lv. 1, 2).—LOWELL.

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"She sat and wept, and with her untressed hair
Still wiped the feet she was so blest to touch;
And He wiped off the soiling of despair
From her sweet soul, because she loved so much.
I am a sinner, full of doubts and fears :
Make me a humble thing of love and tears."
(John xii. 3).—HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

"Speak low to me, my Saviour, low and sweet
From out the hallelujahs, sweet and low,
Lest I should fear and fall, and miss Thee so
Who art not missed by any that entreat—
Speak to me as to Mary at Thy feet."
(Luke x. 3, 9).—MRS. BROWNING.

"The Saviour looked on Peter. Ay, no word—
No gesture of reproach ! The heavens serene,
Though heavy with armed justice, did not lean
Their thunders that way. The forsaken Lord
Looked only, on the traitor. . . .
.

"I think that look of Christ might seem to say—
'Thou Peter ! art thou then a common stone
Which I at last must break My heart upon,
For all God's charge to His high angels may
Guard My foot better? Did I yesterday
Wash *thy* feet, My beloved, that they should run
Quick to deny Me 'neath the morning sun—
And do thy kisses, like the rest, betray?'"
(Luke xxii. 61).—MRS. BROWNING.

CONSCIENCE MAKES COWARDS

As they looked at that Face, which man was bound to honour and woman instinctively to trust, they slunk out like whipped curs. For "conscience doth make cowards of us all." The oldest, with the largest list of sins, led the way in their retreat. The long robes and broad phylacteries did not look quite so imposing as when they first arrived. These men came to judge another. They left self-condemned.

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“ Her hands were clasped downwards and doubled ;

Her head was held down and depressed ;

Her bosom, like white billows troubled,

Fell fitful and rose in unrest.

Her robes are all dust and disordered ;

Her glory of hair and her brow ;

Her face that had lifted and lorded

Fell pallid and passionless now.

“ All crushed and stone-cast in behaviour,

She stood as a marble would stand.

For the Saviour bent down, and the Saviour

In silence He wrote on the sand.

What wrote He? How fondly one lingers,

And questions what holy command

Fell down from the beautiful fingers

Of Jesus like gems in the sand.

“ O better that Homer uncherished,

Had died, ere a note or device

Of his poems was fashioned, than perished

The only line written by Christ.

And He said, ‘ She hath sinned ; let the blameless

Come forward and cast the first stone ’ ;

But they, they fled shamed and yet shameless,

And she, she stood white and alone.”

(John viii. 9).—DR. F. W. AVELING.

Robert Browning is perhaps the most frequently used poet in the pulpit, not so much because of his poetical presentation of Scripture incidents and portrayal of characters, as because of his rare imaginative use of the incidents and characters to express his own religious ideas, which were pre-eminently the most progressive ideas of his time.

Browning grapples with all the problems of the age of science and criticism, and maintains his unshaken hold of Christ as the Light and Life of the world. In

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"A Death in the Desert," for instance, he puts into the mouth of the dying apostle John :—

"For life, with all it yields of joy and woe
And hope and fear,—believe the aged friend,—
Is just our chance o' the prize of learning love,
How love might be, hath been indeed, and is ;
And that we hold thenceforth to the uttermost
Such prize despite the envy of the world,
And, having gained truth, keep truth : that is all.

"I say, the acknowledgment of God in Christ
Accepted by thy reason, solves for thee
All questions in the earth and out of it,
And has so far advanced thee to be wise."

(1 John ii. 35).

Some of Browning's poems that are not directly religious have yet an effective religious application as illustrations. What better illustration is there of the injunction, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," than that of the Renaissance scholar, who devoted his life to the clearing up of the mysteries of Greek grammar. He dies half blind, racked with cough, worn out ; but he had set himself a task to do, and he did it with a single eye and a steady hand, until death overtook him, and his disciples bore him to a fitting grave on a mountain top.

"That low man seeks a little thing to do,
Sees it and does it :
This high man, with a great thing to pursue,
Dies ere he knows it.
That low man goes on adding one by one,
His hundred's soon hit :
This high man, aiming at a million,
Misses an unit.

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That, has the world here—should he need the next,
Let the world mind him !
This, throws himself on God, and unperplexed
Seeking shall find him."

(Eccles. ix. 10).

In "The Patriot" Browning shows how true to life was the fickleness of the crowd that shouted "Hosanna!" to Jesus on the Sunday, and howled "Crucify Him!" on the following Friday. I quote the first, second, and last two of the six stanzas :—

"It was roses, roses, all the way,
With myrtle mixed in my path like mad :
The house-roofs seemed to heave and sway,
The church-spires flamed, such flags they had,
A year ago on this very day.

"The air broke into a mist with bells,
The old walls rocked with the crowd and cries.
Had I said, ' Good folk, mere noise repels—
But give me your sun from yonder skies !'
They had answered, ' And afterward, what else ?'

"I go in the rain, and, more than needs,
A rope cuts both my wrists behind ;
And I think, by the feel, my forehead bleeds,
For they fling, whoever has a mind,
Stones at me for my year's misdeeds.

"Thus I entered, and thus I go !
In triumphs, people have dropped down dead.
' Paid by the world, what dost thou owe
Me?'—God might question ; now instead,
'Tis God shall repay : I am safer so."
(Matt. xx. 8, 9 ; also Matt. xxvii. 20—22).

"The peace of God that passeth all understanding" is perfectly illustrated in a stanza of one of Keble's poems in "The Christian Year"—a stanza that, to

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borrow a phrase of Dr. Maclaren, is "like a handful of snow pressed on a fevered brow."

"There are in this loud stunning tide
Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide
Of the everlasting chime ;
Who carry music in their heart
Through dusky lane and wrangling mart,
Plying their daily task with busier feet,
Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat."
(Phil. iv. 7).

Shakespeare, who was a diligent Bible reader, will often give the preacher a telling illustration. He was a student of the human heart who has never been excelled outside the inspired Bible writers for knowledge of its most secret and subtle workings. His best plays are dramatic sermons — "Macbeth" against ambition, "King Lear" against unfilial behaviour, "Othello" against base passion and treachery in Iago, and against jealousy in the Moorish hero. The workings of a guilty accusing conscience have never been pictured so realistically as by Shakespeare. Macbeth's "Duncan hath murdered sleep," and Lady Macbeth's hopeless attempt to wash the invisible bloodstains from her hands, show how true it is that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. vi. 23). Shakespeare is very rich in the poetical presentation of eternal ethics. Here are two examples of how Dr. Gore, the Bishop of Birmingham, presses Shakespeare into use :—

NO "INDEPENDENCE" OF GOD

Independence of God in any part of our being, in any faculty, in any capacity, in any enterprise—is, of all the silly delusions

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which have ever visited the imagination of man, the silliest and the most false. You know how Shakespeare put the truth in lines so solemn and so searching :

“Heaven doth with us as we with torches do,
Not light them for themselves ; for if our virtues
Did not go forth of us, ’twere all alike
As if we had them not. Spirits are not finely touch’d,
But to fine issues ; nor Nature never lends
The smallest scruple of her excellence,
But like a thrifty goddess she determines
Herself the glory of a creditor—
Both thanks and use ” (Matt. xxv. 18).

SIN AND CONSCIENCE

We must see clearly in the page of history from generation to generation what sin really means to man; we must see, we must recognise clearly and distinctly in the page of literature, as well as in our own experience, what sin means to man in the light of conscience. You remember, do you not? the way in which this is brought before us by Shakespeare in "Richard III." It is the night before Bosworth Field; Richard is alone in his tent, and thus he soliloquises:

My conscience hath a thousand several tongues ;
And every tongue brings in a several tale,
And every tale proclaims me for a villain,
Perjury, perjury, in the high'st degree,
Murder, stern murder, in the dir'st degree ;
All several sins . . .
Throng to the bar, crying all, Guilty, guilty !

Methought the souls of all that I had murder'd
Came to my tent, and every one did threat
To-morrow's vengeance on the head of Richard."

(Gen. iv. 13).

Sometimes a little-known poet rewards the preacher

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with an unfamiliar illustration that the congregation will not easily forget. Take these examples :—

JOHN BROWN AND THE REDEEMING KISS

It is a peril, it is a temptation to enthusiasts, that they are often stung by pity into a rage which leads them to use rash words and to adopt indefensible methods. Among such men was John Brown of Ossawatimie, who was bargee at Harper's Ferry. He had indeed used violent means to encompass hallowed ends, but for all that he will, even from his gibbet, take his place among brave souls who, believing that God is God, trample wicked laws under their feet. You know the touching incident of his execution :

“John Brown of Ossawatimie
Spake on his dying day,
‘I will not have to shrive my soul
A priest in slavery's pay.
But let some poor slave mother
Whom I have striven to free,
With her children, from the gallows stairs
Put up a prayer for me.’
John Brown of Ossawatimie,
They led him out to die,
And lo ! a poor slave mother with
Her little child passed by.
Then the bold blue eye grew tender
And the old harsh face grew mild,
As he stooped between the jeering ranks
And kissed the negro's child.
The shadows of his stormy life
That moment fell apart,
And they who blamed the bloodstained hand
Forgave the loving heart ;
That kiss from all the guilty means
Redeemed the good intent,
And round the grisly fighter's hair
The martyr's aureole bent.”

(Rom. xii. 11).—DEAN FARRAR.

The Preacher Among the Poets

Here is a little poem called "Opportunity," by an American minor poet, E. R. Sill. It pictures admirably what one man can do who is only courageous enough to take advantage of the opportunity to do it.

THE PRINCE HERO

"This I beheld, or dreamed it in a dream :—
There spread a cloud of dust along a plain ;
And underneath the cloud, or in it, raged
A furious battle, and men yelled, and swords
Shocked upon swords and shields. A prince's banner
Wavered, then staggered backward, hemmed by foes.
A craven hung along the battle's edge,
And thought, ' Had I a sword of keener steel—
That blue blade that the king's son bears,—but this
Blunt thing—!' he snapt and flung it from his hand,
And cowering crept away and left the field.

"Then came the king's son, wounded, sore bestead,
And weaponless, and saw the broken sword,
Hilt buried in the dry and trodden sand,
And ran and snatched it, and with battle shout
Lifted afresh, he hewed his enemy down,
And saved a great cause that heroic day" (Eph. vi. 17).

With two other illustrations from the poets, one a modern-day writer who has revived the mystery play, this chapter must conclude.

BURDENS CHANGED TO WINGS

In one of Schiller's poems a beautiful story is told to this effect : When God made the birds He gave them gorgeous plumage and sweet voices, but no wings. He laid wings on the ground and said, "Take these burdens, and bear them." They struggled along with them, folding them over their hearts. Presently the wings grew fast to their breasts and spread themselves out, and they found that what they had thought were burdens were changed to pinions.

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Surrender to God and obedience to Him are not grievous sacrifices, but life and growth and activity (Isa. xl. 31).—DR. A. T. PIERSON.

EAGER HEART

Some of us have been watching within the course of the last month or two a beautiful Christmas mystery play, which was called "Eager Heart." I am thankful to think that that play, which moved some of us at this end of London to tears, has been since then performed in the heart of East London, and, please God, has brought home the message of Christmas through the eye to thousands who perhaps would not have accepted it through the ear.

When Eager Heart had prepared her dwelling for the coming of the king on that wonderful night when he was expected to pass through the town, she saw at her door a poor tired woodman and his wife and a little child. They begged to be taken in. But poor Eager Heart had the lamp there, and the food, and the couch prepared for someone else. "Oh! not to-night, not to-night—any night but to-night!" "Ah!" they said, "but everyone says that; wherever we go that is the answer." After a struggle with herself, the little generous soul gives up her dream. "My dream," she said, "my foolish dream! Come in and rest in my home." She goes out with the lamp to try and meet the king outside. She meets the shepherds, she meets three kings looking also for the King of kings. And when, led by the Christmas star, she comes round again in her search to her own little humble dwelling, "Nay, sirs," she said, "it is impossible. This is my little home; my humble home." And when they persisted, when they said "It must be; the King must be here," and the door was thrown open, there in a blaze of light woodman and wife and child were transfigured, there was the Infant King on her couch, and in her home. What a surprise! (Heb. xiii. 2; also Luke ii. 7).—DR. A. F. WINNINGTON-INGRAM.

CHAPTER VI

ILLUSTRATION OF ADDRESSES TO CHILDREN

THE Sunday morning address to the children is expected in many churches, but it often happens that the preacher, with the best will in the world, fails to interest the children. Children need to be understood before they can be interested, and the deliverer of the children's address must understand the workings of the child's mind, and the child's outlook upon life. He must "be converted and become as a little child" if he would captivate the boys and girls, in the seven or ten minutes which he devotes to the address. Too often the preacher, who is successful enough with the congregation as a whole, has forgotten his own childhood, and even the fact that he is a father does not always save him from talking to the children as if they were grown-up people in knickerbockers and short frocks. To be successful with the children, you must be able, for the time being, to look at the world through a child's eyes. You must clearly understand that the children are interested in things, in sights and sounds, and not in thoughts, theologies and philosophies. Whatever lesson you wish to impress must be dramatised. Illustration, and plenty of it, is absolutely essential to the children's address, and the illustration must be such as children will be naturally interested in. One Sunday morning a small boy plucked his father's sleeve, while the children's

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address was being delivered, and said, "Daddy, there are twenty-five people in the choir. I have just counted them!" That was a most damaging criticism, which the deliverers of children's addresses will do well to take to heart. A little girl, who was asked by the minister, at dinner with her parents, what she remembered of the sermon, said frankly, but brutally, "I don't remember anything. I didn't listen. I never do."

Children have a wonderful capacity for not listening and thinking of something else, and the world, as R. L. Stevenson said, "is full of a number of things" for children to think about when they are not being interested. The child is a born poet and dramatist. Everything is new and wonderful and everything is seen in the mystic light of fairyland. The child makes believe, and its make-believe is often more real to it than the realities of life are to its elders. The preacher who addresses children must take into account the poet and the dramatist in the child. Children believe in fairies, and a fairy-story often makes a good lead off to a children's address. At "Once upon a time" they prick their ears, and fix their eyes upon the pulpit, and the preacher who can tell a fairy-story with conviction and dramatic effect has captured his youthful audience. As examples of fairy-tale openings of children's addresses take those that follow:—

THE CONTENTED HEART

A Japanese fairy-tale tells how a man who was poor, and had to work very hard, heard of a Land of Everlasting Felicity, where people had no illness, no poverty, and did not die. He wished greatly that he might find his way to that land, and one day there

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appeared a magician who told him he would give him one wish, and his wish was that the magician should convey him to the Land of Everlasting Felicity. The magician produced a paper bird, a stork, which he unfolded, and told the man to get astride its back as if it were a horse. He did so, and the stork flew upwards and then swiftly carried the man over land and sea until he came to the Land of Everlasting Felicity. For a few years he lived there contentedly, but then he began to grow discontented, for it seemed dreadfully wearying to have summer all the year round, to have always flowers and fruit, and the fact that there was no anxiety about sickness and about poverty only robbed his enjoyment of the good things of life of their zest. At the end of a hundred years or so, the man, like all the other inhabitants of the country, was bored to death, and wished that something would happen to bring a little variety into the life. When a quack doctor came into the country and sold some pills that gave people a little pain in the inside, and caused their hair to turn slightly grey, he did a roaring trade. The man longed at last to go back to Japan, and was delighted when he woke up and found it was all a dream! The story has a moral which a good many small people, as well as big people, would do well to take to heart. Don't let us always be complaining because we have not everything that we should like to have. The great advantage of not having things is that we enjoy all the more the things that we have. If there were no winter, we should get no pleasure out of spring or summer. If we did no work, there would be no fun in holidays. Even sickness makes health ever so much more delightful when we get about again. Do not let us think the world is all wrong because God does not let us have our own way in everything. The world is God's school, and the difficulties, the hardships, the pains of life, are God's means of training us and making our character robust as the oak that has braved the storms of the winters of a hundred years. Let us take the good that God gives us with a thankful heart, and have faith to believe that many things that seem evils are God's good things in disguise (Phil. iv. 11).—H. JEFFS.

THE JUGGLER'S OFFERING

A beautiful story of the Middle Ages has been retold by a French writer. There was a juggler who went about to fairs,

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carrying with him a mat and the metal balls and other things that he juggled with. He lived a hard life, and when he began to grow old, he turned his thoughts more and more to religion. At that time the only religion was the Roman Catholic religion, and it was believed that the best thing a man could do was to enter a convent and live what was called the religious life. One day the juggler met a monk and told him of his desire to enter a convent. The monk took him to his own convent, where the juggler was received and became a monk himself. He found that the other monks were all busy on some work or other for the glory of God. One would be illuminating manuscripts of the Scriptures or lives of the saints with beautiful pictures. Another would be engaged in carving exquisitely beautiful woodwork. Others would be creating glorious stained-glass windows, and so on. The poor juggler could do none of these things, and he was ashamed and humbled. One day, however, the juggler was missed when the abbot wanted to speak to him. Somebody said they had seen him go into the chapel in which was the statue of Mary, the mother of Jesus. The abbot made his way to the chapel, and was astonished at what he saw there. On the floor, before the statue of Mary, the juggler had spread his strip of carpet, was lying down upon it on his back, and with his hands and his feet was tossing his metal balls with the greatest skill that he had ever shown at any fair in his best days. The abbot was very cross at what he considered such very irreverent behaviour, and was just about to call out in angry tones to the juggler-monk to rise and leave the chapel, when the statue of Mary seemed to become alive, stepped down from its place, descended the steps to where the juggler was tossing his balls, and the statue, taking the mantle of purple and gold from its shoulders, cast it over the juggler as a sign that what he had done was accepted. He had done the best that he could do, the one thing that he could do better than anyone else, and the lesson, of course, to all of us, is that we should do what we can, and do it as well as we can, and God will accept our best (Mark xiv. 8).—H. JEFFS.

THE MAN WITH THE STONE HEART

Years ago in a German fairy-book I read a story of "The Man with a Stone Heart." A charcoal burner in a great forest was

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very, very poor. He had a kind heart, however, full of love for others, and he won the love of others in return. Sometimes he wished that he were richer that he might be able to get a little more enjoyment out of life for himself, and for those dependent on him. One day, while alone in the forest, underneath a fir tree, a queer little old man appeared to him and got into conversation. The old man told him at last that he could and would make him rich on one condition. When the charcoal burner asked what the condition was, the old man said, "You must give me your heart of flesh for a heart of stone that I have." The charcoal burner did not like the condition, but the old man, who was a gnome, and lived in a cave under the wood, persuaded him to go to the cave, and there showed him the stone heart, which was wonderfully constructed and beat as naturally as a real heart of flesh. He persuaded the charcoal burner at last to strike the bargain. He put the poor man into a deep sleep and when he woke up he found that he had got a heart of stone. It worked beautifully, but it seemed very cold within him. When he got home a great change had come over him. He spoke harshly, he thought only of himself, he was unkind to others. Instead of thinking that the chief thing worth having was the love of dear ones, he thought only of getting money. And he did get money. Everything he touched seemed to turn to gold. He became richer and richer, but somehow his riches brought him no joy. The more he had the more he wanted. He had no friends and did not seem to want any. The heart seemed to get colder and colder within him. At last, when age crept upon him, all the joy seemed to have gone out of his life. One day he began to think of the days when he was poor, and the more he thought the more he began to think that those were his best days. The story tells how at last he got rid of the stone heart and regained his heart of flesh, and though he became poor again he got love back again into his life and happiness that his prosperity had failed to give. That story is a parable. There are men with stone hearts going about to-day, and it would pay them to sacrifice all the riches they possess to exchange their hearts of stone for hearts of flesh. Let the boys and girls here, when they grow up, take care to keep the heart warm and tender. The way to keep it so is to let Jesus come into it and make it His home (1 John iv. 7).—H. JEFFS.

The child, as has been said, takes an interest in

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things, and especially in things that are alive, whether belonging to the animal or the vegetable world. If the preacher is interested in gardening and is a student of the fields and of the woods, he can get a good address out of an account of the characteristics and the ways of some plant or flower or vegetable. Plants, flowers and vegetables have characters of their own, and the ways of their growth and their general behaviour appeal to the child mind. The popularity of books published during the last few years, dealing in simple and picturesque fashion with the life of the garden, the field, the wood and the water, is largely due to the interest of young folks in things that grow. Every child, of course, is interested in animals, both tame and wild, and no home is without its four-footed or two-footed pets in the way of animals or birds. There is "a lot of human nature" in animals or birds, as Louis Wain has shown in his pictures, and the child will always listen to the speaker who knows how to press natural history into the service of illustrating his addresses.

Æsop, had he been a modern Christian minister, would have been magnificent in addresses to children ; but there is no reason why every preacher should not be his own Æsop.

The speaker to children should not use dictionary words, and he should not choose subjects that cannot be dealt with without the use of dictionary words. He must limit himself to the vocabulary of children, or he will soon find that his words are falling on deaf ears. Nothing is more tragi-comic than the spectacle of a preacher endeavouring to make himself simple to the

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children and unconsciously using words and phrases that are as foreign to the average boy or girl in the congregation as would be French or German words or phrases used without translation. The language of the children is the homeliest Anglo-Saxon, the words of the mother-tongue pure and undefiled, without mixture of the words invented to express the conceptions of the theologian and the philosopher. The child is interested in the concrete, and not in the abstract. The dictionary words, the words expressive of the results of reflection, will come to the child when he is "farther away from Heaven than when he was a boy," when life has become complex and puzzling and the light of fairyland has faded into the grey sky of routine reality.

The child is a cheerful being. He lives in the sunshine; he does not brood over the problems of pain and evil. It is a mistake on the part of the preacher to attempt to introduce him to the problems of pain and evil too early. Let him enjoy his childhood in the sunshine as long as possible. Let him abound in the fulness of his growing powers, and romp as a young animal, and sing with the birds.

In one of his sermons in St. Paul's Cathedral Canon Scott Holland says:—

The notes of this child temper are therefore wonder and trust. Wonder! have we, who are grown up, let life cease to be wonderful? Has the earth grown drab and hard and naked to us? Are we aware of no strange secrets that haunt it, or of giants that come and go, and call on us to follow? Have we despaired of being surprised at anything? Have we lost hope? Then we are no child. The child ever walks a-tiptoe in a fairy world, trembling at the mysteries that encompass it about within the magic of their delight.

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Oh, what will come next? Who can guess? What paths will open out? Into what tempting recesses? What are those eyes that follow it about, peeping through guarded trees? What are those voices that haunt the delicate air?

Ah! walk warily!
With round eyes expectant!
Nursing a heart big with unutterable thoughts,
Dreaming ever of what might be.

That is how a child fares forward in this amazing world of ours; and if we were but as children in it, we should know and perceive that it is all alive with wonder still; that it is one undying miracle; that it is still charged with all the old mystic powers. God is in this place and we knew it not; angels pass and repass up and down the living stairs; bushes still burn with revelations, voices cry to us under the stars, God moves about the gardens like a breath through the trees; the flowers speak of it, the sea knows it, the heavens brood over it, and the heart of man hides it. It is all still about us, this heaven of our infancy, if only we will open our eyes, if only we will listen and watch (Rev. xii. 7, 8; also Matt. xviii. 1, 3).

The child is a humourist, fond of a joke and a laugh, and a preacher with no sense of humour, who cannot wreath the young faces in smiles and provoke hearty laughter, had better not attempt children's addresses. Once upon a time it was considered right and proper for the preacher to tell doleful stories to the children about boys and girls who were stricken with mortal sickness and died young, and to warn children of the possibility of themselves being taken away from a world full of snares and pitfalls to their heavenly home. It is to be hoped that that style of children's address, and that kind of illustration, are entirely things of the past. Many a testimony has been given by grown-up people of their early life having been shadowed by thoughts and dreams stimulated by the doleful addresses, illustrations,

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and exhortations to which they listened in their childhood.

Let the brightness of life be shown to the children. Let them revel in the joy and gladness of the world. Let them believe that the world is a good world to live in, because their Heavenly Father made it, and because He has given them the faculties to enjoy it. The time will come all too soon when the "shades of the prison-house" will "close around the growing boy," and when he will be forced to see the gloom and the tragedy of life; but until that time comes he will be all the better, and all the healthier, for basking in the sunshine and the gladness. Here are some examples of illustrations that have a dash of humour in them:—

THE ONE DOOR

Sir Isaac Newton had a cat which he liked to have always with him in his study. This cat had a kitten, and Sir Isaac used to be sometimes troubled when he heard the two mewling on the wrong side of the door, waiting to come in. So in an absent mood of mind he ordered the carpenter to make two holes in the door, a big one for the mother cat, and a smaller one for the kitten. He did not realise at the moment, till the astonished carpenter explained to him, that one hole would suffice for both, that the kitten could go in at the same door as its mother. Now, the moral of this homely story is that there are not two doors to religion, one for parents and another for children. Jesus is the door for all. Children, indeed, have the advantage, for grown-up persons have to come down to the condition of children. It is not by the big hole in the door that you get into Heaven, but by the little door; for it is said to everyone, "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven" (John x. 9).—REV. HUGH MACMILLAN.

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"SOLD AGAIN, SATAN"

A very dear friend of mine died in Inverness the other day, Dr. Black, one of the most distinguished ministers in the North of Scotland, and he once told me a story of how wrong-doing affects even a little child. One day the Doctor was preaching in a country church. He came home to the house where he was staying and had dinner, and after dinner was over he was very tired, as he was an old man, and he said he would lie down for a rest before the evening service. He was told just to lie on the sofa, and the lights in the room were put down and he had a little rest. No one ever was told not to disturb the Doctor. As he lay on the sofa waiting for sleep to come, he heard the door open softly, and he looked up and saw a little girl's head peep in. He wondered what she was wanting, and he watched. The room was very dark and the little girl could not see him. She crept in on tiptoe, very quietly, up to the table; then she hesitated, and then pushed a chair in to the table, and climbed up on it, and put her hand out and took a bunch of grapes off a plate in the centre of the table. She then slipped away quietly out of the room and closed the door ever so gently. She had never closed it so gently before—she usually banged it! Dr. Black knew she had been told never to touch the fruit after dinner, and he was disturbed, and wondered what he should do. Should he go after the little girl and tell her she had done wrong? He decided not, and just lay still. But a little while afterwards the little girl entered, with tears in her eyes, looking very, very penitent, and very miserable, and after putting the fruit back again with a sigh of relief, Dr. Black heard her say, "Sold again, Satan!" And she jumped down off the chair, and ran out of the room and the door went bang! (Matt. vi. 13).—REV. S. G. MACLENNAN, M.A.

THE DOVE THAT WENT TO CHURCH

The sluggard, in the Proverbs, was told to "go to the ant: consider her ways and be wise." Some people of to-day might learn a lesson from a dove whose story is told in an American paper. A Newton (Mass.) young lady tells how she attended a church in a Maine town which she visited. Hearing the cooing of a dove, she looked around and saw a white dove perched on the

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organ and listening to the music with great appreciation. The learned afterward that the dove had been a regular attendant at church for eight or ten years, being attracted by the music, of which it was very fond. It was twelve years old, and was the pet of a lady who lived near. After church the dove was taken to his Sunday school class by a boy, and seemed to enjoy the proceedings. Unlike many church goers, the weather made no difference to the dove, as every Sunday, summer and winter, he was at his post on the organ (Ps. xxix. 2 ; also Ps. lxxxiv. 3).—H. JEFFS.

THE PRETTIEST HANDS

I read this story the other day. Three ladies were once discussing who had the prettiest hands. One washed her hands in milk, and so she said hers were the prettiest ; another dipped hers in juice—she was picking strawberries—and they were all pink with strawberry juice ; and the third was gathering violets, and her hands were fragrant with the perfume of those beautiful flowers. Just then, up came a poor old widow body and she asked bread of these ladies ; and they were so occupied with their beautiful hands that they could not give any. Another woman was standing by. Her hands were not beautiful, save by marks of honest toil among them, but this humble woman gave to the poor widow what she asked, and fed her and spoke kindly to her. Then the poor old widow asked what the three ladies were disputing about, and they said, “You shall decide who has the prettiest hands.” She looked at the milk-white hands and she said “No.” She looked at the pink hands and she said “No.” She looked at the violet-perfumed hands and she said “No.” Then she turned to the working woman, and taking her hands said, “The hands that are beautiful are the hands that gave” (Matt. xxv. 34—40).—REV. J. D. JONES, M.A., B.D.

The “Sold again, Satan !” illustration shows how the preacher can help train the conscience of the child. At the tenderest age the child begins to know the difference between right and wrong, and has many a battle to fight between inclination and desire, and the sense of what is right, before conscience becomes the

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ruling power of its life. There is a good deal of the young animal about the child, and it has to learn that its supremacy to the animal lies just in its possession of the power to choose the good and reject the evil, and that its character will grow stronger for each victory over the selfishness and cruelty and meanness that belong to the animal nature. Dean Farrar, in a Westminster Abbey sermon, told a story that is worth repeating:—

THE AWAKENING OF CONSCIENCE

This is the story told of the first awakening of conscience in one who afterwards grew up to be an eminently brave and good man. "When I was a child," he said, "about four years old, my father led me by the hand to a distant part of the farm, but sent me home alone. On my way I had to pass a little pond then spreading its waters wide. A rhodora in full bloom, a rare flower in my neighbourhood, and which grew only in that locality, attracted me to the pond. I saw a little spotted tortoise sunning himself in the shallow water at the root of the flaming shrub. I lifted the stick I had in my hand to strike the harmless reptile, for though I had never killed any creature, yet I had seen other boys out of sport destroy birds and squirrels, and the like, and I felt a disposition to follow their example. But all at once something checked my arm, and a voice within me said, loud and clear, 'It is wrong!' I held my uplifted stick in wonder at the new emotion, the consciousness of an inward but involuntary check upon my own action, until the tortoise and the rhodora both vanished from my sight. I hastened home and told the tale to my mother, and asked her what it was that said to me it was wrong. She wiped a tear from her eye with her apron and said, 'My child, some may call it conscience, but I prefer to call it the voice of God in the soul of man. If you listen and obey it, then it will speak clearer and clearer, and always guide you aright; but if you turn a deaf ear and disobey it, then it will fade out little by little and leave you all in the dark, and without a guide. Your life depends on heeding that little voice.'

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This story may serve as an illustration of Genesis iii., the story of the eating of the forbidden fruit; and of Rom. vii. 21—24, Paul's contrast of the "delight in the law of God after the inward man," and the "other law of the members, warring against the law of the mind."

There is an excellent illustration to enforce the duty and the beauty of unselfishness, and the necessity of its culture by children, in a sermon of Dr. N. Dwight Hillis:—

"GIVE AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN"

Some scholars speak of this as a dark saying, an enigma, at best a half truth. For others, the words, "Give, and it shall be given unto you," are simple as sunshine. I can best state my own interpretation of them by recalling an incident in the life of Agassiz. When he was a boy of ten years he went with his mother to Grindelwald. One day the woman and the child visited the Echo Valley. Knowing that the boy had never heard the echo, the mother told the child that for men there was an old man in the mountain; that for boys there was a boy who dwelt in the mountain, who would answer any one who spoke to him. So the boy lifted up his voice and cried aloud. At once the mountain echoed back the greeting. Surprised, the child called out, "Who are you?" And the mountain answered, "Who are you?" Irritated, Louis Agassiz cried out, "I don't like you!" Straightway the voice answered, "I don't like you!" The reply was too much. The child's lips began to quiver and his eyes filled with tears. "I think that is a very disagreeable boy!" Then the mother took a part in the controversy. She advised the child to give kind words to the unseen stranger. But when he sent a kindly greeting the stranger echoed the overture of friendship. When the child offered to show his things to his new friend, the mountain echoed, "I will show you my things." The boy gave one call, one cry, but the mountain echoed it several times, in voices that grew ever fainter and sweeter. For this is the way of God and Nature. Give kindness, and kindness is received. Give disobedience, and Nature answers with antagonism, (Luke vi. 38).—DR. N. DWIGHT HILLIS.

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Here are two other stories, from life, of the awakening of youthful conscience :—

A GOOD CONSCIENCE

Frank Gordon was reckoned to be the most skilful player of peg-in-the-ring of any boy in the town. Nine times out of ten he would hit the top in the centre of the ring, and on more than one occasion had split it in two. The game was at its height one day, and it was Frank's turn. He told the boys to keep a sharp look out on the top in the ring, as he meant to split it ; but as he wound the string round his top he did not notice that it had got slightly twisted, and when he hurled the top with all his might, instead of hitting the one in the ring it jerked back over his shoulder, and went crashing through a grocer's shop window. There were seven boys standing round the ring when Frank took aim, but when the grocer, who hurried to the door, arrived there, there was not a boy to be seen anywhere. They had all disappeared in different directions. Frank got clear away along with the rest, and took refuge in a stable. He had only been there a few minutes when the thought struck him that it was a very mean, shabby thing he was doing, and for ten minutes a mighty struggle went on in his heart. He felt that it was his duty to go right back and acknowledge to the grocer that it was he who had broken the window. Then something seemed to whisper in his ear, telling him what a donkey he was to dream of such a thing. Let the grocer find it out if he could ; if not, there would be an end to the matter. Then his conscience seemed to tell him that that was cowardly and wicked, and so the struggle went on. Finally, he decided that he would do what he felt to be the right thing. He went back to the grocer's shop and confessed, and undertook to pay the damage if the grocer would only give him time. It swallowed up his pocket-money for a good many weeks, but he went bravely through it. Some of the boys chaffed, and declared what a silly he was ; but in after years Frank came to see that it was the great crisis of his life. He had many a fierce struggle between right and wrong after that, but each victory gained made it all the easier next time (1 Tim. i. 19)

—WILLIAM WARD.

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GODLINESS BEFORE GAIN

It was a great day at the school, when the result of several competitions was to be declared, the chief of which was a gold medal to be awarded to the finest penman in the school. The mayor of the town was to be there to distribute the prizes and awards. The gold medal for the best penman was to be held back to the last. There was deathly silence among the boys and their friends when the head master rose to announce the award. He declared that the judges had had very great difficulty in deciding between the merits of two of the competitors. Every page of each of their copy-books had been written with great care and had followed the copy almost perfectly. There was one page, however, in one of the books that was so superior to any other that the judges had decided that the gold medal should go to this one, and he called upon William Lake to step forward to receive the medal. William came up with a beating heart amid the plaudits of his school fellows. Instead, however, of going right up to the mayor to receive the medal, he went to the head master and asked if he might be allowed to see the special page to which he had referred. The copy-book was produced, and when the boy examined it he turned to the master and said, "That is not my writing, sir. One day the copy-books got mixed; I got Frank Johnson's book and he got mine; that is Frank's writing." "Oh!" said the master, "that alters the case." The judges then put their heads together and decided that the medal must go to Frank. Frank was called up and received the medal at the hands of the mayor. Many of the boys subsequently called Willie a great booby for having acted as he did, but in after years he came to look upon what he did that day as one of the best things he ever did in his life (1 Tim. i. 19). —WILLIAM WARD.

Every child is a hero-worshipper. His first hero and heroine are his father and mother, the noblest and cleverest man, and the kindest and most beautiful woman, in the world. Turn his hero-worship to good account. Let Jesus be presented as the Hero of heroes, who loved the children, and came into the world to set

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them an example of how they may rise to the noblest heights of manhood and womanhood, by walking in His footsteps. The talker to children cannot do better than take some Christian hero or heroine, some missionary, statesman, or Christian soldier or sailor, some man or woman who has done noble things and lived the life heroic, in whatever station of life, and hold up that man, or that woman, as an example to be imitated, telling as dramatically as possible stories of their deeds. Let the children learn that heroism is not limited to the doing of doughty deeds, but that there are heroes and heroines of faith and noble endurance. Some illustrations follow:—

THE HERO CARDINAL

I stood one day in a crypt in Milan Cathedral, before a tomb which was richly bespangled with gold and silver and precious stones. It was the tomb of a man who had been dead three hundred years and more, but it was like a wedding-chamber. His body had been embalmed; it lay in a coffin with a glass lid, and the tomb was simply covered with precious jewels. Once every year the children and people of Milan march in procession to this cathedral and round this crypt, singing a memorial song and a song of grateful gladness to the Lord; for this man, Carlo Borromeo, three hundred years ago, when the black plague visited Milan, and priests and parents and merchants and princes were flying to the hills, and the children were left behind—this man stayed at home and gathered the children together, three hundred and seventy of them, and turned the cathedral into a Sunday-school teacherate—even a nobler occupation!—and the people could not let him die (John xxi. 15).—DR. C. A. BERRY.

THE MIGHT OF SILENT PRAYER

Long, long ago, when the preaching friars were in this land carrying the Gospel to the ignorant, neglected multitude with great

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demonstration of power, it was the custom to send out these missionaries two by two as in the early disciples' days ; and it came to pass that one of these preachers, who was renowned for his gift of utterance, for the converting grace that was upon his lips, was sent out with a blind brother, well-nigh speechless, who never uttered a word, but simply stood or knelt by the side of the gifted one and gazed in silent prayer. The people often wondered why one so gifted had been sent out with one so apparently useless, and the preacher himself often asked why they two had been so unequally yoked together. It came to pass one day that a great multitude were assembled, and the speaker spoke with unusual inspiration. The crowd was moved just as a cornfield is swept before the wind. Men, women, and children were crying under conviction, and the preacher was lifted up and perhaps exalted above measure by the triumph which his words had gained. In his rapture he looked up and cried, "Sun of God, shine on us! Jesus, Saviour, shine on us!" And suddenly the heavens were opened and from the Great White Throne there came a shaft of pure heavenly light which fell upon the face of the blind brother, the face that was uplifted in silent prayer, making it beautiful with the very glory of the Lord ; and then the light passed to the preacher's face and played in sacred fire about his lips, and then from that face to the faces of all the crowd. So did they learn, and so did the preacher himself know, that the power which they had all felt and enjoyed had come straight from Heaven in answer to the silent prayers, and had come first to the humble brother, and passed from him to the preacher and the multitude (Matt. xxi. 22).

—REV. J. G. GREENHOUGH, M.A.

FOLLOWING CHRIST

You remember the old story of the Scottish knight, with the king's heart in a golden casket, who, beset by crowds of dusky, turbaned unbelievers, slung the precious casket into the serried ranks of the enemy, and with the shout, "Lead on, brave heart ; I follow thee !" cast himself into the thickest of the fight, and lost his life that he might save it. And so, if we have Christ before us, we shall count no path too perilous that leads us to Him, but rather, hearing Him say, "If any man serve Me, let him follow Me," we

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shall walk in His footsteps and fight the good fight, sustained by His example (Matt. xvi. 24).—DR. MACLAREN.

Illustrations that catch and hold the attention of children may be got out of their play. From their play many lessons may be deduced—the necessity of good temper, “fair play,” co-operation, training for endurance and skill, mutual encouragement, and so on. To exemplify the use that may be made of play, I give here the outline of an address by my friend Mr. Basil Mathews, B.A.

LET'S PRETEND!

What sport you can have playing “Let’s Pretend.” At home, with an old orange-box, a tea-tray, a comb covered with paper, a nightgown and a clothes-prop we can play pirates or the band in the park, “chapels,” or St. George charging the dragon water-butt with the clothes-prop spear. Every time you girls play with your dolls you play “Let’s Pretend,” with yourself as mother and the dolly as baby. Quote Robert Louis Stevenson’s “Block City” and “Land of Story Books” from his “Child’s Garden of Verses.” The best verse is:—

“Let the sofa be mountains, the carpet be sea,
There I’ll establish a city for me,
A kirk and a mill and a palace beside,
And a harbour as well where my vessels may ride.”

Jesus used to stand in the market-place and watch children playing “Let’s Pretend.” And when some children said “Let’s play at funerals” and “Let’s play at weddings” some of the others wouldn’t. Jesus said that was like some nasty grown-up people. Jesus didn’t like spoil-sports (Luke vii. 32).

The other day I saw scores of boys and even grown-up men at a railway station going away to play “Let’s Pretend” for a whole week. The day before those boys and men had been office-boys, errand-boys and schoolboys, clerks and shopmen. But now they had smart little hats on one side of their heads, belts round their

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waists and some had fifes and drums. They were the boys' brigade going to camp like soldiers. They went to a great open field by the sea with lovely bell-tents where seven of you sleep in a circle on straw palliasses with your toes to the central pole and earwigs crawling over you. Then the stars twinkle and the sea-waves come on the beach with a "hushshshsh" till you go off to sleep.

In the morning a bugle is blown, you look out and rub your eyes and see how fine the weather is. Then you roll up your straw mattresses and fold the blankets while some boys get the breakfast and then wash up—all of you enjoying the things you are too lazy to do at home. Then you all meet in a big tent for morning prayers, and thank God for the roaring sea, the birds and flowers, the fields and the open sky. Then you have drill and play games.

While you are playing "Let's Pretend" at camp you find that it isn't a bit brave and soldier-like to lounge along the street with a cane, a cigarette and a high collar, but that it is true courage to hold up your head, throw back your shoulders, tell the truth, look the world in the face and love and serve God and your fathers and mothers. You are just going to sing

"Soldiers of Christ, arise!
And put your armour on."

Shall we do that? Let's! We shall have even a jollier time than they do in camp if you put on as Paul says (Eph. vi. 10—18) the belt of truth, the breastplate of goodness, peace for shoes, faith in your Captain Jesus as a shield, His salvation as your soldier's helmet, and in the grip of your fist the sword of the Spirit.

Girls, do you think that leaves you out? (Tell the story of Florence Nightingale.) The other day I saw a great hall full of children. When a piano played a boy fell down as if he were wounded. Some girls ran in with a stretcher and bandaged him so beautifully that I wished I had a broken leg, a dislocated shoulder, a sprained wrist and a black-eye to be bandaged. They were playing a Florence Nightingale "Let's Pretend" at their Life Brigade.

Do you ever feel as if there's a bruise right inside you when somebody has been nasty to you? You look at father's face when he comes home at night and you'll see he feels like that sometimes.

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He wants the ointment of little girls' kisses and to be bandaged with loving hugs. Can't we be Jesus' Life-Brigade girls while the boys are soldiers of Christ? God wants a City in which the boys and girls will be playing in the streets (Zech. viii. 5).

The illustration that follows shows what use may be made of children's sports :—

RUNNING TO OBTAIN

There were seven of them on the line—five boys and two girls. It was the Sunday school treat in the big field, and after tea there were races. "One, two, three and away!" Off they go! They have to turn round a teacher fifty yards away and return to the starting point. Soon Jim Tomkins and Pollie Jones take the lead, and keep it nearly to the teacher. Then Pollie breaks the mock pearl necklace she is wearing and, girl-like, stops to pick up the pearls, and runs no more. Tomkins has turned the teacher, but he pulls up suddenly, nearly doubled with pain. At tea he had thoroughly enjoyed himself—three buns, very large and very new, and heaps of bread and butter! A wiry little chap, Jack Smith, and a short chubby-cheeked girl, Maggie Peters, were now leading. Jack had been sparing at tea, saving his buns till the racing was over. He had been practising running for a fortnight. Maggie had taken off her hat and jacket, and had on a pair of light running boots. She had no necklace on to break. She had started steadily, saving herself for a final spurt. The other boys were seen to be "out of it." It was fine to see the splendid finish of Jack and Maggie, who were cheered with "Go it, Jack!" "Go on, Maggie!" by their admirers. Neither could pass the other, and they crossed the line a dead heat. Jack's prize was a pocket-knife that was his joy and pride till he went to work, and Maggie took home a splendid doll which she called "Wendy," after the heroine in "Peter Pan." Both had "run so that they might obtain," and had "laid aside every weight" to "run the race that was set before them" (1 Cor. ix. 24; also Heb. xii. 1).

Two illustrations are added as the contribution of a minister who is very happy in his talks to children :—

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THE FACE OF JESUS

At one place where I preached on a very hot Sunday the congregation were very sleepy except one little girl, who was gazing at me and listening most intently. I preached to her, and she helped me so much that the congregation woke up and we all had what we preachers call "a good time." I did not know the little girl, but some time after, when I was preaching at the same place, I was told she was not there. Just as I was leaving, however, her father told me his daughter was very ill, and not expected to live, and he begged me to go and see her. I went and found it was my little friend, and to my surprise I found she was stone blind, but somehow her eyes had kept their brilliance. I chatted with her and sang a hymn, and then I said, "You are not going to be long here now, dearie. But you are not afraid to die, are you?" And the old smile lighted up her face as she replied, "Oh, dear, no, sir! Don't you know that in Heaven *I shall see*?" And soon the Lord's angel came and took her away, and Jesus said once more "Ephphatha": Be opened. And the first thing she ever saw was the wondrous face of the great King, and the Palace Beautiful (Rev. xxii. 4).—REV. SAMUEL HORTON.

GOD RESISTETH THE PROUD

One day as I lay in a wood I heard a strange voice speaking. It was a tall foxglove which grew on a sunny bank. It was addressing a violet, and this is what it said: "Oh! you poor wee mite! why don't you grow tall like me, and then you would be seen and admired? Nobody sees you down there, and if it were not for your perfume we should not know of your existence." Before the violet could reply a young man came along the path swinging a stick which struck the stalk of the foxglove and cut off its head. As it lay by the side of the violet the latter said: "Had you been content to be small and humble, as I, you might have had a happier fate" (James iv. 6).—REV. SAMUEL HORTON.

The Bible itself is a splendid book of stories, and the talker to the children who knows how to dramatise will always capture their interest by some vividly-told story

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of Joseph or David, or Peter or Paul, or of Jesus Himself. Children have their favourites among the characters of the Bible, and their favourites are the men and the women and the children who did things, and left themselves an everlasting name

CHAPTER VII

ILLUSTRATION OF ADDRESSES TO MEN

THE Brotherhood and the Adult School movements are now gathering in, every Sunday, between six hundred and seven hundred thousand men. The methods of the two movements differ, but they attract the same types of men, and in each movement one of the chief attractive elements is the homely and practical nature of the expositions of Scripture, and treatment of various questions affecting individual and social morals, from the Christian standpoint. The address to men differs from the sermon in several particulars. It is not usually attached to a text, it deals less with the generalities of religion and more with its particular applications. It is free and easy in style, and it gives full play to whatever sentiment and humour there may be in the speaker. The address to men, like the address to children, must take account of the psychology of the hearers. These will generally be working men, who have had only the elementary school education, who are working long hours daily, in occupations that are usually humdrum and not of a kind to quicken their intelligence. They have many difficulties and temptations, they are mostly family men, or young fellows who are looking forward to having homes of their own. Their presence at the Adult School or Brotherhood

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meeting shows that they are interested in religion, that they feel they need all the support that religion can give them, and it testifies to their sense of the need and value of comradeship in living a religious life.

The speaker to men must be intensely sympathetic. He is not to talk down to them as if they were grown-up children. He is to credit them with intelligence—and intelligence highly developed many of these men have, even without the advantage of much education. He is to talk to them in a manly, brotherly way, with that shrewd knowledge of the ways into their mind and heart which only intimate association or sympathetic intuition can give. The speaker to men will find that religion as theology only faintly interests them. It is religion as life, religion as work, religion as helpful, religion as warfare against the enemies of purity and justice, religion as presenting to them a Father in Heaven and a Christ who is their Elder Brother, and who came that all men might be brethren, to which they enthusiastically rally. Religion on its human side, with its romance, its heroism, its drama, its self-sacrifice, its poetry, its colour: religion that takes the whole of life for its province, that sanctifies every day of the week, and every occupation and interest of life, is what appeals to these men. The speaker needs to be very open-minded, very human-hearted, very catholic in his interests, with intimate and varied knowledge of humanity, who addresses such meetings. He will soon find that his addresses must have "body"—that is, they must deal concretely with definite subjects, and not lose themselves in vague generalities. The men are

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willing and eager to be taught, and if they are sent empty away they keenly resent the waste of their time. They like to hear a man who knows something, and can speak with authority about things of which they know little or nothing themselves, and they will listen attentively to a speaker who is not very bright if he is communicating facts to them, and giving them food for thought and for conversation among themselves afterwards. They do love, however, to hear a speaker who has the gift of story-telling, who knows how to point his moral with a tale or an illustration drawn from human nature, from natural history or from mechanical processes with which they are familiar. A Midland Brotherhood listened with all its ears to the principal of a theological college who discoursed to them on the romance of the manuscripts of the New Testament. They were keenly interested as he told them of "palimpsests"—writings of the New Testament, written over the faded or partly rubbed out MSS. of secular works, profane tales, lives of the Saints or commentaries of earlier writers—as he explained the difference between "uncial" and "cursive" writing. The principal drew lessons from the palimpsests, uncials, and cursives, and the men went away feeling that they had had a royal feast.

I have said that the speaker to men can give free play to his humour and sentiment. The Rev. F. B. Meyer, B.A., is first favourite among ministers as a speaker to men. He has told how he was born without humour in his composition, but he came to realise that humour is a means of grace. It opens the heart of a

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man which is closed to all serious appeal because humour is "the touch of Nature that makes the whole world kin," and so Mr. Meyer cultivated the faculty of humour, with what successful results all who hear him are pleasantly aware. A speaker who can tell a humorous story or illustrate a point with a humorous analogy can convey much-needed warnings to men about their faults and foibles, which they would probably resent if the admonitions were given in a solemn lecturing fashion. Here is a story that has done excellent service in my own addresses to men, and has never failed to make its effect:—

RECLAIMED TO HOME LIFE

In one of his amusing and sympathetic stories of working life in London, Mr. W. Pett Ridge tells how a working man, who was a merry companion at the "Pig and Whistle," startled his wife one evening by spending the evening at home. He liked it so much that he did the same thing the next night, though during the day he had to threaten he would knock down the next man who referred to his absence from the "Pig and Whistle" and accused him of being a teetotaller. "Reminds me," he said to his wife on the second evening, "of our old courting times. 'Appy days! 'Appy days! Not too late for them to come again." They had no children. Her sister had nine—blessings are very unequally distributed in this world. She had wanted to adopt one of the nine, and he had refused, but on this second evening of restored domesticity he announces that he is in favour of the idea of taking one, and calls "Hands up, all who vote for the resolution. All!" he announced jovially. "Carried! Now, is there anything else?" "I wish—I wish, Thomas, that every woman had as good a husband as I've got." "After you," he said in a husky voice; "after you with the handkerchief."

This story makes its direct appeal to the domestic sentiment of the working man, and the speaker to men

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need never be afraid of wearing his heart upon his sleeve in the matter of the display of sentiment provided it is healthy sentiment ; and all sentiment that makes for the strengthening and sweetening of home life is healthy sentiment. With all fiction, all poetry, and his own observation of home life and of the ways of men, women, and children to draw upon, the speaker to men ought to have little difficulty in keeping up a supply of telling domestic illustrations. The Brotherhoods and Adult Schools themselves afford many illustrations to speakers who know their work. They have drawn men in who, before they were brought back under the influence of religion, had not attended any place of worship for many years, and made sad messes of their lives for lack of the moral support and guidance that religion gives. There are few Brotherhoods and Schools that have not trophies, in the shape of men who had wasted their lives, and neglected their homes, with terrible and tragic results. Men have been pointed out to me in many meetings whose homes had been little hells upon earth, whose wives trembled and turned pale at the sound of the husband's staggering steps at the door, and whose children, at the sound of the father's drunken oaths, hid their frightened heads under the bed-clothes, but in the Brotherhood or School they "came to themselves" ; their lives were transformed, their warm-hearted comrades helped to make new men of them, and their homes were changed into little heavens here below. The men listen eagerly to stories of such transformations, as illustrative of the power of the Gospel and the power of Brotherhood. A speaker need not

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be afraid of putting his teaching into the concrete form of such a story, though he will, of course, avoid any indication of the man whose story he is telling.

An appeal to chivalry in the men's meeting, illustrated by a romantic mediæval story or a "modern instance" of chivalrous conduct, is always heard with approval, and makes its deep impression. There is need for the revival of chivalry among the men of all classes. Chivalry means gentleness of heart combined with manly courage, it means the tender concern of the strong for the weak, the suffering, and the oppressed, and it means the respect which the true man always pays to womanhood and childhood. Here is another story from a famous living novelist that has been a favourite at men's meetings:—

CHIVALRY

There is a fine imaginative portrait of a mediæval knight in the Sir Nigel Loring of Sir Conan Doyle's fourteenth-century romance, "The White Company." Sir Nigel lived in his castle at Christchurch with his lady, a gaunt, forbidding woman, harsh of feature and figure, with a sharp tongue and yet a warm heart. Sir Nigel, because she was a woman and his wife, elevated her to a pedestal of honour which, to us in our prosaic days, seems absurd. He regarded his lady as the most beautiful and the most virtuous lady living, and was prepared to defend her name for beauty and virtue against any man who dared to say that his lady or any other lady excelled Sir Nigel's lady. The lady herself one day, when he was praising her beauty, said that people would laugh at him for doing so. Sir Nigel bade his trusty squire to take particular note of anybody who ventured to smile when he was vaunting his lady's beauty and he would have debate with the rash man, and by debate Sir Nigel meant a bout with broadsword or lance. When Sir Nigel was leading his White Company to the coast to embark for the wars in France and Spain, his lady rode with him part of

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the way. When they came to the place where she was to turn back. Sir Nigel bent low in his saddle, kissed her gloved hand, begged for the glove, and attached it to his cap to wear through his campaigns.—H. JEFFS.

Modern chivalry includes zeal for social reform that will rescue the victims of a fiercely competitive system of industry from conditions that stunt manhood and womanhood, and prevent the healthy development of the faculties of mind and heart, and by demoralising the individual tend to the corruption of society. The speaker to men cannot avoid touching on questions of social and moral reform, but he will do little good if he is not primed with facts and cannot illustrate every point by a statement of facts, and by vividly-told stories picturing the conditions—and the ruin wrought by the conditions on the manhood, the womanhood, and the childhood living in them. Mr. William Ward, the lay speaker who is most in demand at Brotherhood meetings the country over, makes his strong impression on the men by the building up of his addresses from facts he has carefully collected, and then putting the facts in the strong light of the teaching of the prophets and the teaching of Jesus. No one illustrates his facts by Scripture, and his Scripture by his facts, more effectively than Mr. William Ward, and he is easily first among Brotherhood speakers in the use he makes of illustrations culled from the poets. The men at such meetings like poetry that has the prophetic note and the note of optimism in it. Mr. Ward's two books, "How Can I Help England?" and "Religion and Labour," contain collections of addresses that are models of the art of practical illustration. Mr. Ward does not deal much

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in stories as stories, but there is a story in the introduction to "Religion and Labour" which is perfect for the purpose for which it was intended.

A LESSON IN THE SEWERS

A short time ago one of the members of the London County Council brought forward a resolution which, if passed, would have pledged the Council to pay to the whole of the workmen in their employ a minimum wage of thirty shillings per week. The proposal met with strenuous opposition and, on being put to the vote, was lost. In arguing in favour of his resolution, the Labour member had pleaded particularly on behalf of the men employed in the sewers. He contended that these men needed special consideration, owing to the dangerous and disagreeable character of their occupation and the value of their work to the community. He was astounded to find that his proposal to better the condition of the men did not receive the support of a member who was well known as a man of high character, actuated by lofty and noble motives, and prominently identified with the philanthropic life of London. The Labour member was at a loss to understand how such a man could hesitate to support a resolution that meant doing so simple an act of justice, and he determined to find out the reason, which he discovered was lack of knowledge concerning the nature of the duties, and a lack of serious consideration; also that the sewer men were already receiving the rate of pay ordinarily given to men for doing this class of work. "Do you know what kind of work it is?" asked the Labour member. "Have you ever been down a sewer?" He laughingly replied that he had not. "Well, then," said the Labour member, "will you come with me down one of the sewers and see for yourself the kind of work these men do, often while you and I are asleep. After you have seen it, if you still think it is not worth thirty shillings a week, I'll admit that you were justified in voting against it." What could an honourable man do but accept the challenge? Arrangements were accordingly made, and guided by one of the sewer men, the excursion was undertaken. They descended a sewer through a manhole in Russell Square. They waded through indescribable filth and had to protect themselves with stout sticks from the innumerable rats with which the

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sewers were infested. Sometimes they were able to get along fairly comfortably with stooping a little, but in some parts the sewer was so low they had to stoop considerably, and travelling was particularly painful and slow, and on one occasion our friend, who is six feet in height, got wedged in one of the four-feet six-inch drains. Every now and then an unexpected rush of water would invade the sewer, and he often wondered if he would get out alive. After wading through it for at least an hour, and having travelled upwards of a mile, they emerged through a manhole in Clerkenwell. "Well," said the Labour member, when they saw daylight once more, "is it worth thirty shillings a week?" He gasped, "I wouldn't do it for thirty pounds a week. I shall support your resolution next time you bring it on." And he did. If you ask him why he changed his mind, he will tell you he did it on religious grounds.

One invaluable result of the Brotherhood and Adult School movements is their bringing into "the fighting line" of distinguished men in various walks of life such as Sir Oliver Lodge, Mr. Jerome K. Jerome and Mr. Arthur Henderson, M.P., who in their various ways present religion in its practical aspects, and by their mere presence and speech at the meetings make an immense impression by dissipating the notion that men of science, literature and affairs have rejected religion. From a Brotherhood address of Sir Oliver Lodge I quote an extract, and add a little sheaf of illustrations of the kind to which men eagerly listen.

A PARABLE OF THE POLES

The way to warm up the Arctic Ocean, and melt all the ice there, and make the land inhabitable, would be to submerge the Antarctic continent. Why? What is that Antarctic continent? It is a tremendous area, about one-fortieth of the whole circumference of the globe, it is said, and it is piled up with snow and ice, mountains high; there is a mountain as high as Mont Blanc at the fringe,

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and in the interior it is very much higher. That means an immense volume, and what would be the effect if that became liquid and came into the sea? If that snow and ice disappeared the ocean would rise. Moreover, by its gravitative attraction—I do not know whether everyone will follow this, but you know that all matter attracts all other matter by gravitative attraction, and if the sea is kept piled up in the southern hemisphere in that frozen condition it is much higher than it would otherwise be. If that Antarctic continent disappeared, subsided, was submerged, all that water, not only the water packed up as snow, but the water of the ocean, attracted by this gravitative attraction, would be released and flow up here, and some of our lowlands would be submerged. In addition, the Antarctic Ocean would be no longer land-locked; a hot-water circulation from the tropics would be laid on, and the Arctic ice would disappear. If I have made that quite clear, I only mean it as a parable—you cannot have even the North Pole isolated from the South Pole; what happens to one affects the other. It may affect it for good, or it may be for ill, but it affects it. So it is with us. Our life cannot be isolated. Whether we are millionaires, or whatever we are, we are bound up with the rest of the human race, and if one member suffer, all suffer with him (1 Cor. xii. 26).—SIR OLIVER LODGE.

SOMETHING WRONG WITH THE BAND

What was the matter with the orchestra? Usually it was in fine form, playing with exhilarating spirit and the delicacy of expression and light and shade that revealed men who had music in their souls. There was a splendid conductor, who wielded a *bâton* that the men watched, and he infused his own rapture in the music into the band. That afternoon, however, nobody paid any attention to the *bâton*. It seemed as if an evil spirit had entered into every man—a spirit of disobedience, of jealousy, of self-will. A programme of pieces had been arranged, but nobody troubled about the programme. Each man chose his own favourite solo, and they all played their solos at once, each getting the greatest noise possible out of his instrument so as to drown the efforts of his companions. The big drummer brought his stick down with thunderous “booms” on the beats of the “Marseillaise,” the cornet blared out “The Lost Chord,” the trombonist

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nearly split his cheeks with a noisy bit of the "Tannhäuser" overture, the man with the piccolo shrilled out with ear-piercing gusto "The Campbells are coming," the little drum kept up a continuous mad tattoo. Each man was playing music, but the net result was a Bedlam discord. "Sweet bells jangled out of tune" were nothing to it. What had happened? Why, they had ceased to be "brethren dwelling together in unity"; there was no longer any unity of the musical faith and spirit; they had said to each other, about the conductor, "we will not have this man to reign over us." Everybody put his hands to his ears and fled from the hall. The story, of course, is a parable. In industrial life, in political life, in family life, in church life, we hear the same horribly discordant music because those who should "dwell together in unity" of affection and in loving obedience to Christ the great example, are fighting and intriguing for their own selfish ends, and a world that should be filled with heavenly harmony is filled with clashing discords that send shivers through the soul that has become sensitive to heavenly song and symphony. Let us call a silence, and look to Jesus, and obey His *bâton*. "Let earth and heaven agree, angels and men be joined to celebrate with me the Saviour of Mankind" (Ps. cxxxiii. 1; also Eph. iv. 3—13).—H. JEFFS.

GOD'S HIDDEN TREASURE

Two or three years ago it was my privilege to stand upon one of the most interesting spots on the earth's surface, on the lid of the world's great diamond vault in Kimberley. There beneath my feet were uncounted treasures, and yet only thirty years ago no one believed there were any diamonds in Kimberley; in fact, it was ridiculed by the wise geologists of the day, who said it was utterly impossible that diamonds should be found in Kimberley, the stratification of the soil was such, and the configuration of the land was of such a nature, that it could not be that diamonds were there. The few precious stones which had been found on the surface of the earth there they thought must have been brought by someone from a long distance in the interior, and somehow dropped upon the soil there. But as men began to dig beneath the surface they found more diamonds, and as they went deeper still they found more diamonds still; the deeper they have gone into God's great diamond vault the larger are the diamonds and the more

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precious and beautiful. When men got down into the yellow soil beneath the surface they found more glittering gems, and when they got into the diamondiferous blue they found greater treasures still. God has been showing the world in this and a thousand other ways what He is able to do. He can keep His diamond vault sealed until the right moment comes ; for hundreds and thousands of years He can padlock the vault, but the time comes when His time is ripe, when the clock has struck, for the lid to be lifted off, and for men's eyes to be dazzled by God's hidden treasure (2 Chron. xxv. 9).—DR. F. E. CLARK.

KEEP OUT OF DEBT

"Owe no man anything." It is that young couple, and they begin life on a competence—enough if they would be modest in their requirements. But they have richer friends, and they think the good things of the world are meant for them, too. Why should they not have them? And so they find themselves living beyond their income. There are bills they cannot pay, and then begins that long period of bondage, of misery, that sense of guilt, that misery which comes when we cannot, and ought not to, look people in the face.

"No debtors' hands are clean,
However white they be ;
Who lives and pays his way
True gentleman is he" (Rom. xiii. 8).—DR. GORE.

THE END OF THE UNRETURNED PRODIGAL

There was one born to a title, bearing a great name, beautiful in outward seeming, a man for whom society waited, at whose feet it was prepared to fall and proclaim him indeed a genius ; and he expressed his genius in poetry that many still admire, and all then thought wonderful. He expressed it in dolorous melodies, and by-and-by in darker and more dismal numbers. He had a home that could not satisfy ; he had affection, but too pure to be esteemed ; he had praises, but not loud and fulsome enough to be precious ; he panted for vaster things, for an intenser life. And then he went from his native shores, bidding them in his scorn, "Good-night," and seeking, as he phrased it, "for change of scene, even the

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shades below." In a moment of fired and transient heroism he sprang to call an ancient people to arms, but sprang too late into the ranks of the noble and chivalrous, and ere his sun had reached its meridian he had to express the moral of his life in the miserable stanza :

My days are in the yellow leat,
The fruits and flowers of love are gone ;
The worm, the casket and the grave
Are mine alone.
The light that on my bosom plays
Is like as some volcanic isle,
No torch is lighted at the blaze
But a funereal pile.

(Luke xv. 13).—DR. A. M. FAIRBAIRN.

DO YOUR OWN BIT OF WORK

On the walls of London lately a new kind of advertisement has appeared. There is only a face and a hand and a foot—nothing more. I never see that without thinking it resembles the life of a young man. He sees a bit here and there of his destiny, but what is to weld them together and fill in he does not see yet, but he waits. If you cannot perceive you must trust, realising that God is working out His plan in the little things of daily life. He does not show you the whole, but gives you the glimpse of a bit. He says : " Make that ; do yonder piece of work, which lies next to your hand. Do not rush it, or slur it ; do your duty, and your best." Thus, as every day we fulfil the day's demand, we fill in a little more of the perfect plan, and suddenly one day, as we are fulfilling some trivial round, it will prove the connecting link, and we shall find all the disconnected fragments combined in perfect symmetry, and exclaim : " I never saw it before, but I perceive God's purpose in my life " (John ix. 4).—REV. F. B. MEYER, B.A.

STRENGTH MULTIPLIED IN COMRADESHIP

You know that large collection of errors, the multiplication table. It is as full of mistakes as it is of figures, but it contains no bigger mistake than this, that twice one are simply two, and that ten times one are ten. Nonsense ! Twice one now is not simply two, but

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two plus their unity. Ten men working together, each man working heartily, what have you? You have ten times one man plus the unity—plus the enthusiasm born of co-operation, plus all the incalculable energies that are only born when heart is joined to heart and soul is joined to soul (Eccles. ii. 9, 10).—REV. J. MORGAN GIBBON.

CHRIST'S TRANSFORMING KISSES

There is an old wild legend that tells of how a knight found, coiling round a tree in a dismal forest, a deathly dragon breathing out poison ; and how, undeterred by its hideousness and foulness, he cast his arms round it and kissed it on the mouth. Three times he did it undisgusted, and at the third the shape changed into a fair lady, and he won his bride. Christ "kisses with the kisses of His mouth" His enemies, and makes them His friends because He loves them (Song of Songs i. 2).—DR. MACLAREN.

ONE COURAGEOUS MAN

I remember in those memoirs of Napoleon which Lord Rosebery has just lately brought before us and revived again in our minds, Napoleon has one or two suggestions to offer about the successful conduct of war, and there is one suggestion in these memoirs which appeals to me as a very pertinent thing even in the life of the spirit. Napoleon says : "There is a moment in every great war when the bravest troops feel inclined to run ; it is the want of confidence in their own courage," and then Napoleon says : "The supreme art of generalship is to know just when that moment will come and to provide for it. At Arcola"—I am quoting the words exactly—"I won the battle with twenty-five horsemen. I anticipated the moment of fright and flight, and I had twenty-five men ready of cool nerve and decision, and just at the appropriate moment I turned the twenty-five into the host, and the battle was won." Twenty-five men who had not lost their nerve brought back confidence to a host who were inclined for fright and flight. The man who was cool for fight brought back the hordes that were ready for flight. Has that no analogy in the realm of the spirit? One brave member of a family may save the whole household from moral perdition ; one young fellow in a warehouse may save all his mates from the timidity which means hell ; one fine, brave lad in a school

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—will the lads listen to this?—who will despise all meanness and set his eyes upon the true and follow it, may gain a whole form for the army of the Lord (Ps. xxvii. 14).—REV. J. H. JOWETT, M.A.

THE EAGLE IN CAPTIVITY

I looked not long ago with genuine pity on a noble eagle, caged in a public park, as an exhibition for schoolboys. The old grey mountaineer felt its galling imprisonment and occasionally flapped its wings as if it were homesick for the skies. "Loose him and let him go," was the thought inspired by the sorry sight, and how he would have sailed off to fly in company with the sun! Eagles were not born for slavery. I thought, too, as I looked at the chained bird, how much he resembled some fettered souls, yes, some Christian souls that are terribly tied down by unbelief. Too many people have enrolled themselves in the Church—some have entered the ministry—with a heavy clog that binds them to the lower earth. It hampers them, hinders them, and is fatal to all spiritual joy or growth in holiness (John xi. 44).—DR. CUYLER.

THE FORCE OF GENTLENESS

I read a story not long ago about Richard Weaver, who was a great Methodist evangelist. In his young days he was a great pugilist. He was always getting drunk, and then quarrelling with somebody, until he was hated and feared by all. But God touched his heart, and then Richard Weaver became a changed man. He was down the pit one day and saw a collier trying to take a boy's waggon from him by force. "Tom," said Weaver to him, "you mustn't take that waggon." The man swore at him and told him he would push the waggon over him. But Weaver took hold of it, and the man was unable to move it. "I've a good mind to smack thee on the face," said the angry collier. "Well," said Weaver, "if that will do thee any good, thou canst do it." And so he struck him on the face. Five times he did it, and then turned away cursing. And Weaver cried after him, "The Lord forgive thee, for I do!" That was on a Saturday. Monday came, and when Weaver came back to work, with his face still bruised and swollen from the blows he had received, the first man he met with was Tom—the man who struck him. "Good morning, Tom," said

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Weaver to him, but he got no reply. Tom went down the pit first ; when Weaver followed he found Tom waiting for him on the waggon-way, and as soon as Weaver got up to him, he burst into tears and said, "Richard, forgive me for striking you." "I have forgiven thee," was Weaver's reply, and with that he gave him his hand. Gentleness, you see, was repaid with gentleness (Luke vi. 29).
—REV. J. D. JONES, M.A., B.D.

FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH

There was an old gatekeeper in the town of Yen Shan. He was a very simple man, and nobody had ever credited him with very special religious convictions, but he knew whom he had believed, and when the Boxers came they set the old man in the middle and began to torment him before they put him to death. They asked him to sing to them, and in a quavering voice—for he had never learned to sing—he began to sing "He leadeth me." And then at the end they called for more, and he sang "Heaven is my home." The man who told the story said it was the strangest scene—this old man with the quavering voice, ringed round with faces that were like fiends from hell, singing in their midst, "Heaven is my home." And then they killed him (Rev. ii. 10).—REV. C. SILVESTER HORNE.

The growing success of the Brotherhoods and Adult Schools is building up a bulwark of defence against the attacks made on Sunday as a day of rest and worship. I conclude this chapter with some illustrations of the value of Sunday to the working man and the community at large.

HOW SUNDAY CLEARS THE PATHS

Away in the Alps in the winter the snow falls, and in a very few hours road and pathway and mountain track will be absolutely blocked out, and if you force your way into the village and speak to some of the country folk concerning it, they will smile and say, "Wait until the people go to church on Sunday." And you wait, and on Sunday you see, there from the house on the heights, there from the chalet in the valley, moving dots that mean men dressed

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in brown, or women clad in black, and all turn their steps to a little church, whose bell echoes through the mountains and sends its reverberations over the vastness of the snow-clad Alps ; and as their paths converge together, the people tread the snow under foot and trample it into firmness, so that those on the heights can come down, and when Monday morning comes the paths and tracks are open again, and sledges can go up and down in comfort.

My brethren, we also must learn a lesson from the people of the whitened hills. We want to see to it that when we are seeking the best and highest for ourselves, that which we do not only opens a way for other people to follow us into the presence of Christ, but that all that we do confers some benefit upon the common roads and ordinary ways and everyday doings of humanity (Mark ii. 27).

—REV. J. G. STEVENSON.

SUNDAY ENRICHMENT OF ALL LIFE

There is a myth concerning an old painter, that by a happy chance he compounded one day a certain mordant, which, colourless itself, possessed the power of heightening every colour with which it was mixed. By the help of his discovery, from being a commonplace artist he rose to the position of a noted master. His works were renowned for the marvellous brilliancy of their tints. On his canvas were produced, in exactest hue, the waving emerald of the forest, the silver gleam of the river, the rosy light of the sunset, and the infinite azure of the sky. Everywhere and always the charm of the picture was due to that colourless fuse of colour which by its strange alchemy transfigured the crudeness and the coarseness of the common tint. It is not mere ecclesiastical prejudice which asserts that the Christian Sabbath has silently and similarly wrought vigour and attractiveness and power into our modern life. All fair-minded judges pronounce it our social mordant. Unrecognised in its workings, the Christian Sabbath is the element that has wrought out the choice beauty of the things of which we boast in our civilisation (Mark ii. 27).—DR. D. GREGG.

SUNDAY AS A DISINFECTANT

There is a great humanising, disinfecting effect in our Sunday services that in the aggregate it would be hard to compute. If thousands of tons of quicklime were to be strewn in the gutters of

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a plague-stricken city, a handful at a time, the purifying effect would afford a good simile. I believe that if on Saturday night our police judges could sentence to church those miserable objects that appear in their courts on Monday morning, they would have no occasion to hold police courts on Monday morning (Mark ii. 27).—
REV. JOHN F. COWAN.

SLAVES OF THE MINE

Years ago I paid a visit to the mining regions of Pennsylvania at the time of a threatened strike. I said to one of the miners, "Why don't you go out West, and take a farm and work there, and be independent?" He replied, "We don't want to work out-of-doors. We want to work down in the mines, where it is nice and dark, and the sun doesn't shine, and it isn't hot, and when it rains we are dry." When I see a man to whom God has said, "You may have one day on the hilltop, where the birds are singing and the sun is shining, and the heavens are full of the liberty of the glory of the sons of God—when I see him sit down and read the Sunday paper full of the news of the factory and the market, and the turmoil and strife of politics, I think, "There is another miner who doesn't care to live out-of-doors" (Exod. xx. 8).—
DR. LYMAN ABBOTT.

CHAPTER VIII

FLOWERS FROM OLD ENGLISH GARDENS

ILLUSTRATIONS are not plants that do well when bedded out from the garden plots of an earlier age into the preacher's garden of our own times. The best illustrations are those that grow in the soil, and in the atmosphere, of the time in which they are used. Still it is interesting to study the preachers of former times and to note their methods of illustration. The sermon volumes of the eighteenth century are arid reading. In the early part of that century the chilly air of rationalism was fatal to the feeling which generates illustrations. The appeal of the preachers was to the head and not to the heart. There was no mysticism in religion, no poetry, no New Jerusalem all radiant with jasper walls and with foundations of precious stones. As there was no deep feeling, sentiment and humour were alike lacking, for humour is the sunny side of sentiment. Later in the eighteenth century, when the ice of the long winter of rationalism began to melt in the spring of the Evangelical Revival, flowers began to bloom again in the preachers' gardens; but Whitefield and John Wesley were far too intent on getting souls saved to give much attention to the ornamentation of their sermons. We have to go back into the seventeenth century to find preachers who were masters of the art of illustration. Such masters there

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were indeed even in the sixteenth century, when the early Protestant preachers were making their messages known to "the common people," to whom the open Bible was a wonderful new revelation. Honest Hugh Latimer, like Luther in Germany, was rich in homely illustrations drawn from common life, and sometimes his illustrations were amazingly audacious. In his famous "Card Sermon" he drew upon the pack of cards and the gambling methods of the time to play a winning game with the sinners whose souls he was seeking. When denouncing the absenteeism of bishops and clergy who were negligent shepherds, he held up to them the devil as a model bishop who was always in his diocese and always at work. Such illustrations drove in his teaching as a hammer drives in nails, and none who heard them could ever forget them. Let us confine ourselves, however, to the seventeenth century.

A search through the volumes of the great Anglican and Nonconformist preachers, down to the time when the first chilly blasts of rationalism began to be felt, discovers a rich store of illustrations racy of the soil in which they were grown. We soon find that the seventeenth century preachers were very scholarly men. They had the contents of the Bible at their finger ends, but they knew the classical writers of Greece and Rome almost as well as they knew the Bible. They seem to have read everything in Greek and Latin literature, from Homer and Herodotus, Virgil and Tacitus, down to the decadent writers of the latest age. We are dazed by the display of their learning, and amazed and amused at the use they made of it in the illustration of their

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sermons. We wonder what the congregations made of their classical illustrations. Doubtless the congregations liked to hear them as evidences of the weight of learning of the preachers, and as compliments paid to their own intelligence, but it is permitted to question whether the illustrations did not oftener confuse than enlighten. Often they quote passages in Greek, Latin, or Hebrew, without troubling to translate them for the benefit of the congregation. And they continually introduce names and references, assuming that the congregation will readily understand them without explanation, as, for instance, Jeremy Taylor, condemning contemporary fondness for fashions, says, "Menander in the comedy brings in a man turning his wife from his house because she stained her hair yellow, which was then the beauty"; and in his "Apples of Sodom" sermon, "What man is there in the world that thinks himself covetous or proud? and yet millions there are who, like Heiphaste, think that the house is dark but not themselves." Thomas Adams shows himself a prodigy of classic learning, which he pours out in such illustrations as these: "Philip was wont to say that an ass laden with gold would enter the gates of any city, but the golden loads of bribes and extortions shall bar a man out of the city of God. All that is so gotten is like quicksilver, it will be running." "The Christian seeks, like Mary, that better part which shall never be taken from him. The wise man's mind is ever above the moon, saith Seneca. Let the moon make never so great a noise as if it all ran upon coaches, and all these full of roarers, yet all peace is there."

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The pedantry of classical quotation disfigures the sermons of most of the early and middle seventeenth century preachers, but we do in some of them find plenty of native English wildflowers.

Foremost among these is Jeremy Taylor, who has been styled "the Shakespeare of the English pulpit." As a prose writer, Taylor is the Ruskin of the seventeenth century. His imagination runs riot, and he often indulges in illustrations with such prodigality that his hearers must have been embarrassed by the riches placed at their disposal.

Some of the illustrations, however, are brief enough, little more than a simile, as "He that wishes his sin big and prosperous wishes his bee as big as a bull and his hedgehog like an elephant"; "Great knowledge, if it be without vanity, is the most severe bridle of the tongue. For so have I heard that all the noises and prating of the pool, the croaking of frogs and toads, is hushed and appeased upon the instant of bringing upon them the light of a candle or a torch." Jeremy Taylor was not gifted with a sense of humour, or he might have avoided such remarkable illustrations as that in which he says some men never trouble about religion until they are sick or in adversity, "as the hog never sees the sky until it is turned upon its back."

When we come, however, to Jeremy Taylor's extended illustrations, then we understand why he has been called the Shakespeare of the English pulpit. They are pure poetry, "linked sweetness long drawn out"; and there is a dash of Milton as well as Shakespeare. Peculiar to Jeremy Taylor is the opening "So have I seen,"

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evidently an imitation of the epic simile method of Homer and Virgil. Readers will thank me for extracting four examples of Jeremy Taylor's illustrations, showing the characteristics that have been described.

SOARING PRAYER

Anger is a perfect alienation of the mind from prayer, and therefore is contrary to that attention, which presents our prayers in a right line to God. For so have I seen a lark rising from his bed of grass, and soaring upwards, singing as he rises, and hopes to get to heaven, and climb above the clouds ; but the poor bird was beaten back with the loud sighings of an eastern wind, and his motion made irregular and inconstant, descending more at every breath of the tempest, than it could recover by the libration and frequent weighing of his wings ; till the little creature was forced to sit down and pant, and stay till the storm was over, and then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing as if it had learned music and motion from an angel, as he passed sometimes through the air about his ministries here below : so is the prayer of a good man ; when his affairs have required business, and his business was matter of discipline, and his discipline was to pass upon a sinning person, or had a design of charity, his duty met with infirmities of a man, and anger was its instrument, and the instrument became stronger than the prime agent, and raised a tempest and overruled the man ; and then his prayer was broken, and his thoughts were troubled, and his words went up towards a cloud, and his thoughts pulled them back again, and made them without intention ; and the good man sighs for his infirmity, but must be content to lose the prayer, and he must recover it, when his anger is removed, and his spirit is becalmed, made even as the brow of Jesus, and smooth like the heart of God ; and then it ascends to heaven upon the wings of the holy dove, and dwells with God, till it returns like the useful bee, loaden with a blessing and the dew of heaven (John ix. 31).

ABOUNDING GRACE

Pardon of sins is a grace that the most holy persons beg of God with mighty passion, and labour for with a great diligence, and

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expect with trembling fears, and concerning it many times suffer sadness with uncertain souls, and receive it by degrees, and it enters upon them by little portions, and it is broken as their sighs and sleeps. But so have I seen the returning sea enter upon the strand ; and the waters rolling towards the shore, throw up little portions of the tide, and retire as if Nature meant to play, and not to change the abode of waters ; but still the flood crept by little steppings, and invaded more by his progressions than he lost by his retreat, and having told the number of its steps, it possesses its new portion till the angel calls it back, that it may leave its unfaithful dwelling of the sand : so is the pardon of our sin ; it comes by slow motions, and first quits a present death, and turns, it may be, into a sharp sickness ; and if that sickness prove not health to the soul it washes off, and it may be will dash against the rock again, and proceed to take off the several instances of anger and the periods of wrath ; but all this while it is uncertain concerning our final interest, whether it be ebb or flood ; and every hearty prayer, and every bountiful alms, still enlarges the pardon, or adds a degree of probability and hope ; neglect of religion makes the pardon retire ; and while it is disputed between Christ and Christ's enemy who shall be Lord, the pardon fluctuates like the wave, striving to climb the rock, and is washed off like its own retinue, and it gets possession by time and uncertainty, by difficulty and the degrees of a hard progression (Heb. xii. 28, 29).

PREVAILING PRAYER

The river that runs slow and creeps by the banks, and begs leave of every turf to let it pass, is drawn into little hollownesses, and spends itself in smaller portions, and dies with diversion ; but when it runs with vigorousness and a full stream, and breaks down every obstacle, making it even as its own brow, it stays not to be tempted by little avocations, and to creep into holes, but runs into the sea through full and useful channels : So is a man's prayer. If it moves upon the feet of an abated appetite, it wanders into the society of every trifling accident, and stays at the corners of the fancy, and talks with every object it meets, and cannot arrive at Heaven ; but when it is carried upon the wings of passion and strong desires, a swift motion and a hungry appetite, it passes on through all the intermedial regions of clouds, and stays not till it

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dwells at the foot of the throne, where mercy sits, and thence sends holy showers of refreshment (Eph. vi. 18).

THE MUSIC OF THANKSGIVING

So have I seen the sun kiss the frozen earth, which was bound up with the images of death, and the colder breath of the north ; and then the waters break from their enclosures, and melt with joy, and run in useful channels ; and the flies do rise again from their little graves in walls, and dance a while in the air, to tell that there is joy within, and that the great mother of creatures will open the stock of her new refreshment, become useful to mankind, and sing praises to her Redeemer : so is the heart of a sorrowful man under the discourses of a wise comforter ; he breaks from the despairs of the grave, and the fetters and chains of sorrow ; he blesses God, and he blesses thee, and he feels his life returning ; for to be miserable is death, but nothing is life but to be comforted ; and God is pleased with no musick from below, so much as in the thanksgiving songs of relieved widows, of supported orphans, of rejoicing and comforted and thankful persons (Isa. lxi. 3).

The sermons of Thomas Adams were republished in 1861, in three volumes. He was minister of St. Benets in the City. Even his titles are illustrations. For instance, two sermons on Gen. xxvii. are entitled "Politick Hunting" and "Plain Dealing." Four sermons on Prov. ix. 17—18 are entitled "The Fatal Banquet," with a sub-title to each, viz., "The First Service," "The Second Service," "The Breaking up of the Feast," "The Shot." The sermon on Eccles. ix. 3 is entitled "The Mystical Bedlam." Adams has a dry humour which he often uses with good effect, as the following illustrations will show :—

PRAY AND FIGHT

Fables are not without their useful morals. A boy was molested with a dog ; the friar taught him to say a gospel by heart, and

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warranted this to allay the dog's fury. The mastiff, spying the boy, flies at him ; he begins, as it were, to conjure him with his gospel. The dog, not capable of religion, approacheth more violently. A neighbour passing by bids the boy take up a stone ; he did so, and throwing it at the dog, escaped. The friar demands of the lad how he sped with his charm. "Sir," quoth he, "your gospel was good, but a stone with the gospel did the deed." The curs of Antichrist are not afraid of our gospel, but of our stones : let us fight and they will fly (Judges v. 8, 9).

GREAT VOWS AND SMALL PERFORMANCE

It is storied of a merchant that in a great storm at sea he vowed to Jupiter if he would save him and his vessel, to give him a hecatomb. The storm ceaseth, and he bethinks that a hecatomb was unreasonable ; he resolves on seven oxen. Another tempest comes, and now he vows again the seven at least. Delivered then also, he thought that seven were too many, and one ox would serve the turn. Yet another peril comes, and now he vows solemnly to fall no lower ; if he might be rescued, an ox Jupiter shall have. Again freed, the ox sticks in his stomach, and he would fain draw his devotion to a lower rate ; a sheep was sufficient. But at last being set ashore, he thought a sheep too much, and purposeth to carry to the altar only a few dates. But by the way he eats up the dates, and lays on the altar only a few shells. After this rate do many perform their vows. They promise whole hecatombs in sickness, but they reduce them lower and lower still as they grow well (Ps. lxi. 13).

MAN'S INGRATITUDE

There is a story of a poor man that went often to a forest to gather sticks, where suddenly one day he heard the voice of a man in distress. Making towards it, he found a rich neighbour fallen into a deep pit ; and together with him an ape, a lion, and a serpent. He made his moan, being endangered both of the pit and of the beasts. Pity and charity moved the poor man to help the rich, and that seldom moves the rich to help the poor. He lets down the cord wherewith he bound his sticks, and up comes the ape. Again he puts for the man, and the lion ascends. A third offer he makes, and the serpent takes the advantage. Last he draweth up

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the man, who, freed by his help from instant death, promised him a bounteous requital, if on the next day he did visit him. The poor man affying his word, came to him accordingly in a hopeful expectation of reward. But now the rich man would not know him. He hath forgotten that ever he stood in any need of him, and impudently denies him any recompense. The discomforted poor man is fain to travel the forest again for his fuel, where the ape spying him, had ready broken, with his teeth and nails, sticks enough for his burden ; there was his utmost gratitude. Another day coming, the lion approacheth him, presenting to him divers laden camels, which driving home and disburdening, he found precious treasure that enriched him. A third time, upon other occasions travelling the forest, the serpent, creeping, salutes him with a precious stone in her mouth, letting it fall at her savor's feet. The intent of the fable is to demonstrate that beasts and serpents condemn man of ingratitude (Ps. cxviii. 27).

THE PRINT OF THE WOUNDS

It is storied of a certain king, that fighting a desperate battle, for the recovery of his daughter injuriously stolen from him, found ill success, and the day utterly against him ; till by the faithful valour of a strange prince, disguised in habit of a mean soldier, that pitied his loss, and bore love to his daughter, he recovered both her and victory, the prince interposing himself to hazard of death and many wounds for the other's redemption. Not long after, this prince received some wrong concerning his honour, which he deservedly prized. He made his complaint to the king, and besought him to give a just censure of his cause. The forgetful king put him over to a judge. The prince replies, " O king, when thou wast lost, I endangered myself for thy rescue ; I did not bid another save thee, but I saved thee myself. Lo, the scars of those wounds I bore to free thee and thy state from inevitable ruin. And now my suit is before thee, dost thou shuffle me off to another ?" (John xx. 25).

" BUT !"

As in a fair summer's morning, when the lark hath called up the sun, and the sun the husbandman ; when the earth hath opened her shop of perfumes, and a pleasant wind fans coolness through

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the air; when every creature is rejoiced at the heart, on a sudden the furious winds burst from their prisons, the thunder rends the clouds, and makes way for the lightning, and the spouts of heaven stream down showers; a hideous tempest sooner damps all the former delight than a man's tongue can well repress it. With no less content do these guests of sin pass their life; they eat to eat, drink to drink, often to sleep, always to surfeit; they carol, dance, spend their present joys, and promise themselves infallible supply. On a sudden this *but* comes like an unlooked-for storm, and turns all into mourning, and such mourning as Rachael had for her children, that will not be comforted, because their joys are not (Eccles. xi. 9).

A seventeenth century preacher who was a great favourite with Charles Haddon Spurgeon was Thomas Brooks, who made it his special business to track Satan through his windings, and to expose the subtle snares by which he sought to trap the soul of the unwary sinner. Brooks had the soul of a poet. Like Jeremy Taylor, he heaps illustration on illustration, seeming to strip whole gardens of their flowers in order to deck his sermons and writings. The modern preacher will possibly find himself able to adapt some of Brooks's illustrations to present use much more easily than he could those of Jeremy Taylor or Adams. Here is a little bunch of simple flowers from Brooks's garden:—

THE SOUL'S LOOKING-GLASS

It was a speech of a German divine in his sickness: "In this disease I have learned how great God is, and what the evil of sin is; I never knew to purpose what God was before, nor what sin meant, till now." Afflictions are a crystal glass, wherein the soul hath the clearest sight of the ugly face of sin. In this glass the soul comes to see sin to be but a bitter sweet; yea, in this glass the soul comes to see sin not only to be an evil, but to be the greatest evil in the world, to be an evil far worse than hell itself (Heb. ii. 10).

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DAY COLDNESS AND MIDNIGHT WARMTH

I have read of a fountain that at noonday is cold, and at midnight it grows warm ; so many a precious soul is cold Godwards and heavenwards and holinesswards, in the day of prosperity, that grows warm Godwards and heavenwards and holinesswards in the midnight of adversity (Heb. xii. 6, 7).

THE STARS IN THE PUDDLE

Although you see the stars sometimes by their reflections in a puddle, or in the bottom of a well, aye in a ditch, yet the stars have their situation in heaven. So, though you see a godly man in a poor, miserable, low, despised condition for the things of this world, yet he is fixed in Heaven, in the region of Heaven. "Who hath raised us up," saith the apostle, "and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. ii. 6).

OUR ADVOCATE

Mrs. Catherine Bretterge once, after a great conflict with Satan, said, "Reason not with me, I am but a weak woman ; if thou hast anything to say, say it to my Christ ; He is my Advocate, my strength, and my Redeemer, and He shall plead for me" (1 John ii. 1).

ROSES AND GARLIC

They say roses grow the sweeter when they are planted by garlic. They are sweet and rare Christians indeed who hold their goodness, and grow in goodness, where wickedness sits on the throne ; and such a one the young man Abijah, the son of Jeroboam, in the text was.

To be wheat among tares, corn among chaff, pearls among cockles, and roses among thorns, is excellent.

To be a Jonathan in Saul's court, to be an Obadiah in Ahab's court, to be an Ebed-melech in Zedekiah's court, and to be an Abijah in Jeroboam's court, is a wonder, a miracle.

To be a Lot in Sodom, to be an Abraham in Chaldea, to be a Daniel in Babylon, to be a Nehemiah in Damascus, and to be a Job in the land of Husse, is to be a saint among devils ; and such a one the young man in the text was.

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The poets affirm that Venus never appeared so beauteous as when she sat by black Vulcan's side. Gracious souls shine most clear when they be set by black-conditioned persons. Stephen's face never shined so angelically, so gloriously, in the church where all were virtuous, as before the council where all were vicious and malicious (1 Kings xiv. 13).

THE OLD DISCIPLE

It is a very great honour to be an old disciple. Now this honour none reach to, but such as are converted betimes, but such as turn to the Lord in the spring and morning of their youth. It is no honour for an old man to be in short coats, nor for an old man to be a babe in grace. An A B C old man is a sad and shameful sight. Oh ! but it is a mighty honour to be a man, when he is old, that he can date his conversion from the morning of his youth (Jer. iii. 4).

"FOR HE HAD GREAT POSSESSIONS"

The young man in the Gospel took many a step towards Heaven. "All these things have I kept from my youth up. What lack I yet?" (Matt. xix. 16—24). Christ makes a very fair offer to him in the next words : "Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven ; and come and follow Me." Thou shalt have Heaven for earth, a sea for a drop, a treasure for a mite, a crown for a crumb. Ay, but the young man's affections were strongly engaged to the things of the world, and therefore he turns his back upon Christ, and goes away sorrowful, because he had great possessions. Though the loadstone cannot draw the iron when the diamond is in presence, yet earthly possessions did draw this young man's soul away when Christ the pearl of price was present. The world is a silken net, and this young man found it so ; the world is like sweet poison, and this young man found it so ; for he had drunk so large a draught of it, that there was no room in his soul for Christ, or Heaven, for grace or glory. Some say, that when the serpent Seytale cannot overtake the flying passenger, she doth with her beautiful colours so astonish and amaze them, that they have no

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power to pass away till she have stung them. Such a serpent the world proved to the young man in the Gospel ; it did so affect him and take him, so amaze him and amuse him, that he could not stir till it stung him to death (Matt. xix. 16—24).

There was no sweeter spirit in the seventeenth century than Richard Baxter who "sought peace and ensued it" in a time when party drew the sword against party, and sect against sect, with a fury unexampled in English history. Baxter's masterpiece, "The Saint's Everlasting Rest," was once, next to "The Pilgrim's Progress," the most eagerly read book in every Christian English home. It is a book that might well be read in our own time when the swords of the churches are again too frequently drawn against each other. A famous anecdote of Baxter is that of his retort to the savage Judge Jeffreys. Baxter was before the judge as a Nonconformist and Jeffreys said, "Richard, Richard, I see a rogue in thy face." Even a saint will turn, and Baxter's instant reply was, "My lord, I never knew till now that my face was a mirror." We are dealing, however, with illustrations, and the seventeenth century bouquet would lack completeness if there were no examples of Baxter. He is not so much a poet as a practical preacher, and of the two illustrations selected the first may well be taken to heart by preachers of to-day who fail to realise the heavy responsibility of their calling.

COLD-BLOODED PREACHING

If you be busy, writing or reading, and one friend comes to you to call you away to some great business, and useth very weighty arguments, yet if he speak them coldly and sleepily, you

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perhaps may not be moved by him ; but if another come and call you but upon a lesser business, and speak loud and earnestly, and will take no denial, though his reasons be weaker, he may sooner prevail. Do we not feel that the words of a preacher do take more with our wills and affections, from the moving pathetical manner of expression, than from the strength of argument (except with very wise men) at least, how much that furthers it, when the best arguments in the mouth of a sleepy preacher, or unseasonably and ill-favouredly delivered will not take? And why should we think that there is so great a difference between other men's reasonings prevailing with our wills, and our own reason's way of prevailing? (2 Cor. v. 20).

HID WITH CHRIST IN GOD

Can a man be at the fire, and not be warm? or in the sunshine and not have light? Can your heart be in Heaven, and not have comfort? The countries of Norway, Iceland, and all the northward, are cold and frozen, because they are farther from the power of the sun; but in Egypt, Arabia, and the southern parts, it is far otherwise, where they live more near its powerful rays. What could make such frozen uncomfortable Christians, but living so far as they do from Heaven? And what makes some few others so warm in comforts but their living higher than others do? And their frequent access so near to God? When the sun in the spring draws near our part of the earth, how do all things congratulate its approach? The earth looks green and casteth off her mourning habit; the trees shoot forth; the plants revive; the pretty birds how sweetly sing they; the face of all things smiles upon us, and all the creatures below rejoice. Beloved friends, if we would but try this life with God, and would but keep these hearts above, what a spring of joy would be within us, and all our graces be fresh and green! (Col. iii. 3).

Other seventeenth century sermon illustrators who deserve representation in this bouquet of flowers are Henry Smith, known by his contemporaries as "Silver-tongued Smith," David Clark, who is as poetical as Brooks, and the rarely quaint Thomas Fuller.

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OWLISH INQUIRERS

As an owl peeps at the sun out of a barn, but dares not come to it, so we peep at religion and will not come near it, but stand aloof off, pinking and winking, as though we were more afraid of God than the devil. For self-love and regard of persons, and fear of laws, and sway of time, more are afraid to be too holy than to be profane, because holiness is worse entreated than profaneness. (Acts xxvi. 27, 28).—HENRY SMITH.

“ALMOST” BORN

What is it to be born almost? If the new man be but born almost he is not born. What is it to be married almost unto Christ? He which is married but almost is not married. What is it to offer sacrifice almost? The sacrifice must be killed ere ever it can be sacrificed. He which gives almost gives not, but denieth. He which believeth almost believeth not, but doubteth. Can the door which is almost shut keep out the thief? Can the cup which is but almost whole hold any wine? Can the ship which is but almost sound keep out water? The soldier which doth almost fight is a coward. The physician which doth but almost cure is but a slubberer. The servant which doth almost labour is a loiterer. I cannot tell what to make of these defectives, nor where to place them, nor how to call them, nor unto what to liken them (Acts xxvi. 27).—HENRY SMITH.

PRYING INTO THE INCOMPREHENSIBLE

Commonly the simplest men busy their heads about the highest matters; so that if they meet with a rough and crabbed question, like a knob in the tree, and while they hack and hew at it with their own wits to make it plain, their saw sticks fast in the cleft, and cannot get out again; at last in wrath they become like malcontents with God, as though the Scripture were not perfect, and either fall into despair or into contempt of all. Therefore it is good to leave off learning where God has left off teaching; for they which have an ear where God hath no tongue, hearken not unto God but to the tempter, as Eve did to the serpent (Mark ix. 38—40).—HENRY SMITH.

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GOD'S WORD MADE CURRENT COIN

The Gospel preached is the Word of God, not of man, though by man; God is the fountain, man but the conduit pipe; He the Author, man the instrument; it is the sun His light, they the medium. He gives His Word in Scripture as a lump of precious metal, more precious than gold, appoints ministers to beat it out into large plates; and as gold is the same in the lump and mass and in the plate, so is the Word the same Word of God as it is read and as it is preached; He gives us His Word in the Scriptures as honey in the comb, He appoints the ministers of the Gospel to squeeze it out, it is the same honey in the comb as out. Only take this caution, that the Gospel preached be received as the Word of God, it is required he that preaches it should be sent by God, invested with His authority, appointed to be His vicegerent, sent as ambassador from Him, otherwise doctrine agreeable to God's Word cannot be delivered authoritatively as the Word of God; it is like silver, though precious in itself, yet not current, not money, without the magistrate's stamp and impression (Luke viii. 18).—DAVID CLARKSON.

THE TWO HANDLES OF FAITH

That God is willing and able are two *ansas*, two handles, on which both the hands of faith may take hold, and so act more strongly (as we do) than if it use but one. A man ready to drown, if he can lay hold upon anything with both hands to keep him from sinking, is more secure than if he can but stay himself by one. Faith is but weak when it fastens but upon one of these; the doubting of either will keep off faith from its steadfastness. Martha's faith was not steadfast (John xi.) when she questioned whether Christ was able; and the leper's faith staggered when he doubted whether Christ was willing (Matt. viii. 2): "If Thou wilt, Thou canst."—DAVID CLARKSON.

THE OFFERED JEWEL

If a man should hold out his hand and offer you a jewel, you would think that a sufficient ground to take it, though he should not express by any special qualifications that he intended it for you

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in particular ; nay, though he should speak never a word, yet being one who is not wont to delude any, his holding it out and offering it to you would be a sufficient encouragement to receive it. So it is here : the Lord holds out Christ to humbled sinners in the general offers of the Gospel ; and He never is wont to delude any, much less those that are returning to Him. Is not His offer a sufficient ground for you to receive what He offers ? (Rev. xxii. 17).
—DAVID CLARKSON.

WASTED TIME

Coming hastily into a chamber, I had almost thrown down a crystal hour-glass. Fear lest I had made me grieve as if I had broken it. But, alas ! how much precious time have I cast away without any regret ! The hour-glass was but crystal, each hour a pearl ; that but like to be broken, this lost outright ; that but casually, this done wilfully. A better hour-glass might be bought ; but time lost once, lost ever. Thus we grieve more for toys than for treasure. Lord, give me an hour-glass, not to be by me, but to be in me. “Teach me to number my days.” An hour-glass, to turn me, “that I may apply my heart to wisdom” (Eph. v. 16).—
THOMAS FULLER.

“WE LOOK FOR A CITY”

Travelling on the plain (which, notwithstanding, hath its risings and fallings), I discovered Salisbury steeple many miles off. Coming to a declivity I lost the steeple thereof ; but climbing up the next hill, the steeple grew out of the ground again. Yea, I often found it, and lost it, till at last I came safely to it, and took my lodging near it. It fareth thus with us, whilst we are way-faring to Heaven ; mounted on the Pisgah-top of some good meditation, we get a glimpse of our celestial Canaan ; but when either on the flat of an ordinary temper, or in the fall of some extraordinary temptation, we lose the view thereof. Thus in the sight of our soul Heaven is discovered, covered, and recovered ; till, though late, at last, though slowly, surely, we arrive at the haven of our happiness (Heb. xi. 10).—THOMAS FULLER.

GREEN WHEN GREY

In September I saw a tree bearing roses, while others of the same kind round about it were barren. Demanding the cause of the

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gardener why that tree was an exception to the rule of the rest, this was rendered : because that alone being clipped close in May, was then hindered to spring and sprout, and therefore took this advantage by itself to bud in autumn. Lord, if I were curbed and snipped in my younger days, by fear of my parents, from those vicious excrescences to which that age was subject, give me to have a godly jealousy over my heart, suspecting an autumn spring, lest corrupt nature (which without Thy restraining grace will have a vent) break forth in my reduced years into youthful vanities (Ps. xc. 12 ; also Ps. xcii. 13, 14).—THOMAS FULLER.

INIQUITIES OVER THE HEAD

I have observed that children, when they put on new shoes, are very curious to keep them clean. Scarce will they set their feet on the ground for fear to dirty the soles of their shoes. Yea, rather they will wipe the leather clean with their coats, and yet perchance the next day they will tramp with the same shoes in the mire up to the ankles. Alas ! children's play is our earnest. On that day wherein we receive the Sacrament we are often over-precise, scrupling to say or do those things which lawfully we may. But we, who are more than curious that day, are not so much as careful the next, and too often (what shall I say ?) go on in sin up to the ankles ; yea, our sins go over our heads (Ps. xxxviii. 4).—THOMAS FULLER.

Study of the seventeenth century preachers inspires us with an immense respect for the men who pressed into their preaching all the power of brains cultivated to the highest pitch, and all the intensity of their devout souls. Such study raises the question whether preachers of to-day sufficiently credit their congregations with intelligence to receive and digest the best that it is in them to give. Modern congregations possibly have neither the patience nor the appetite to receive and digest sermons so full of meat and marrow as those of the seventeenth century preachers ; but is it not true

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that much of the absenteeism of men from public worship in these days is due to their complaint that the meat given is not nourishing enough, and that the sermons give them so little to feed their minds and set their imagination at work? If men such as Jeremy Taylor, Adams and Brooks preached to-day, what use they would make in the way of illustration of the wealth placed at their disposal by modern literature, modern science and modern industrial conditions! The men of England will be won back to the churches when the preachers feed their minds and hearts alike with appetising and nourishing food.

APPENDIX I

ILLUSTRATED OUTLINES OF SERMONS

I.—A BASKET OF FRUIT

“ But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance ” (Gal. v. 22, 23).

WHAT a lovely basket of summer fruit ! And it is mixed fruits, not a basket of apples, or pears, or grapes only. In a horticultural show you will see plates of particular fruits, to which prizes have been awarded. Sometimes you will see a plate heaped up with all kinds of fruit, to which a prize has been given for the best assortment. All the prizes offered in the Heavenly Horticultural Exhibition are for collections of mixed fruits. The fact is that in spiritual horticulture it is difficult, if not impossible, to grow one kind without the others. It is true we have the figure of Jesus as the vine, and we as the branches ; but the branches, vitalised by the Divine sap, bear all the fruits of the Spirit. John, in his vision of the New Jerusalem, saw on the banks of the river the Tree of Life, “ which bare twelve manner of fruits,” and you will note that it yielded its

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fruit every month—that is, it was always bearing. The trouble is, that so many Christians think they can make a fair show of one kind of fruit, without trying to grow the rest. A man, for instance, will specialise on temperance, in the limited modern acceptation of temperance, and he might feel disposed to enter as a competitor in the Heavenly Horticultural Show in the class “Temperance”; but when it came to long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, he would probably say, “H’mph, no; I don’t think I have anything worth showing in those classes.”

You will note that the text begins with a “but.” The “but” implies comparison and contrast. The comparison is with “the fruits of the flesh”; and what a dreadful catalogue of these fruits Paul gives us! Before we grow the fruits of the Spirit we must clear the ground and pluck up the roots of the trees that bear the fruits of the flesh. I read in the memoirs of a country vicar that he found the glebe-land had been neglected for years, and the soil was so knotted with squitch and bindweed, and so choked and poisoned with rank weeds, that it took a very long time to clear it and prepare it for the production of useful crops. It is just so with the heart of man. The evil growths have to be plucked up by the roots, and this is a painful process, that will leave the heart bleeding—so painful that many content themselves with just cutting down the plants to the surface of the ground. No wonder the plants soon begin to shoot up again and choke the plants which should be bearing the fruits of the Spirit.

Before fruit there is blossom, but blossom does not

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always form itself into fruit. All Wales, during the revival, was pink and white with blossom, but much of it was blighted and frost-bitten before the time of the ingathering of the ripened fruit. The blossom is often frost-bitten in the atmosphere of a cold church.

In the 92nd Psalm there is a beautiful promise that "those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall still bring forth fruit in their old age." This reminds us again of John's Tree of Life that bore fruit all the year round. Sometimes you will go into a garden and find an old fruit tree with gnarled trunk, and the owner will tell you, "That tree used to bear splendid apples, but it has seen its best days and bears little or nothing now. I shall have it cut down." The trees in the Lord's garden, however, the older they get are the more fruitful. Their boughs are never so heavily laden, nor with such luscious fruit, as when they are approaching the end of the allotted span of earthly life.

How shall we be fruit-bearers? Only by union with Him who is the vine. The closer our communion with God the more fruitful are we. If we are bearing little fruit, and that of poor quality, it shows that our attachment to the vine is a very slender one. There are some who bear fruit indeed, but it is scarcely worth the gathering. There are apples, but they are crab-apples, and unfortunately the crab-apple crop in the churches is often too plentiful; there are pears, but they are tasteless and woody. Let us all aim to be fruit-bearers, and we shall be helping to convert the world into "Eden the Garden of God."

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II.—“HE WROTE ON THE GROUND”

“But Jesus stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground as though He heard them not” (John viii. 6).

THIS is the only bit of writing by Jesus that is recorded; and even here we do not know what Jesus wrote on the ground. It would have been interesting to know what He wrote; but it is of thrilling interest to know what He said and what He did. Jesus stands before us in the circle of the self-righteous scribes and Pharisees, with the shrinking and shame-faced woman who was a sinner, and He shows Himself to be the soul of chivalry, the Gentleman of gentlemen. He was infinite purity, the woman was stained with sin; but she was not more sinful than the whited sepulchres who accused her. Jesus wrote on the ground and spoke, and again He wrote on the ground, and the convicted hypocrites slunk away leaving Him alone with the woman. One question He asked her and received her answer, and spoke the word: “Neither do I condemn thee. Go, and sin no more.”

What does it matter that we know not what He wrote? We know what He was and what He says, and every repentant sinner is to “go, and sin no more.” Has the world outgrown the need of His message? Suppose Jesus to-day stood in the midst of the circle of money-makers, the men engaged in trade and commerce who are growing rich by practising “the tricks of the trade,” and they dragged into the circle some cowering, shabbily-dressed wretch whom they accused of pilfering, and perhaps snatching the watch from the

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pocket of one of the burly gentlemen standing around. The big sinner whose sins are respectable is in every age the most merciless judge of the man whose sins are of the vulgar order. The magistrate on the bench may be a director of the brewery whose beer has maddened the disorderly drunkard in the dock; or he may be a shareholder in some company that systematically overworks and underpays its employees, and one of the employees has been tempted to theft or embezzlement; or he may be the owner of rack-rented slum property that is the haunt of vicious people; but the drunkard, the embezzler, the immoral person before him will get stern justice from the magistrate. The fashionable lady gives a wide berth to the flaunting Magdalen of the pavement; but that woman may have been led into her evil life by the terrible hardships she endured in a sweated industry. Suppose to-day the eminently respectable rich and the ornaments of fashionable society formed a ring, and the criminal or the vicious person stood in the centre with Jesus. What would He write on the ground? To Jesus sin is sin in the mansion as well as in the cottage; in the West-end square as well as in the Bermondsey courts and alleys; and He would read the hearts of those who stood around, as well as the hearts of those with Him in the centre; and it may be now, as then, that when He wrote on the ground and then stood and invited the guiltless to cast the first stone, the circle would dissolve like snow in the sunshine. and only the vulgar criminal or vicious person would remain. Not "the righteous," by which Jesus meant the self-

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righteous, but the sinner Jesus came to save; and the sinner, when he stands alone with Jesus, feels His eyes piercing through, realises the infinite pity in His heart, sees the foulness of his own life in the white radiance of His purity, then he is broken down, and goes away with bowed head and His words ringing in his ears, "Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more."

Jesus is always in our midst, and always the crowd is gathering around some trembling, wretched sinner. Some crime or some scandal fills the columns of the papers with sensational news, over which the readers gloat, and the circulation of the paper mounts up by thousands. Everybody as he reads drapes himself in his robe of self-righteousness and wonders that such things can be in this Christian land. They stand around the sinner, pointing the finger of scorn and demanding that justice be done. Suppose Jesus stood by the side of the sinner and wrote on the ground. How many, when He rose and asked the one whose conscience was clear of offence to cast the first stone, would dare to remain and look steadfastly into the mild eyes of the Master? We need to search our own hearts and see what evil thing there is in us and to look upon our fellow sinners with the Master's eyes. It may be that then, instead of walking away, we should step into the dock, as Hawthorne's minister did in "The Scarlet Letter," and take our stand by the side of the sinner. If we did so, surely the Master would speak the same words to us both: "Go, and sin no more."

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III.—THE MULTITUDE AND THE MAN

“ But when He saw the multitudes He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd ” (Matt. ix. 36).

FROM the window of my room in Fleet Street, on Lord Mayor's Show day, I saw the pageant of English men of letters, poets and dramatists, with characters from their works, and English men of music. It was a brilliant show, and had more brains put into its conception and execution than is usual with Lord Mayor's Shows. Much more interesting than the show, however, was the crowd. The crowd lined the pavements of Fleet Street twenty to twenty-five deep, and was densely packed to a depth of something like fifty yards up Chancery Lane. It occurred to me, as it has often occurred in bustling Fleet Street, that every man and woman in that crowd was a story, a drama, a poem incarnate. The crowd as a crowd suggests little except mass and number. All the romantic interest, all the possibilities of comedy and tragedy, were in the individuals.

The multitudes, the crowds, flocked to Jesus, while He was in the flesh, and He was the first who in the crowd clearly saw and understood the individual. If you read the chapter from which the text has been taken, you will discover why Jesus was able to distinguish the man and the woman in the crowd. He had been dealing with the individuals—had healed the woman with the issue of blood, had given back living to the ruler his dead daughter, had opened the eyes of

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the two blind men, had cast out the devil from the dumb man and given the man speech. Jesus understood that the crowd was made up of individuals who needed helping, and His heart went out to the individuals. Nineteen centuries have passed, and the crowd is ever with us ; and to-day the crowd is making its voice heard, often in tones of menace. The crowd is becoming conscious of its rights, perhaps more conscious of its rights than of its responsibilities. How do we regard the crowd ? Is it only a mass and number of humanity to us, or is it composed of men and women who have hearts to feel, bodies to suffer pain, souls to be saved or lost ? Parliament, Government departments, county and borough councils administer laws and levy rates, churches gather congregations, and ministers preach to the crowd. Perhaps if in our minds we took samples of the crowd and thought more of the man and the woman, we should be more successful in our attempts to deal with the mass. In the mass too often we sum up the crowd in a phrase, as the Northern Farmer who said, " The poor in a lump is bad." The upper classes are luxurious and tyrannical, the middle classes are snobbish and vulgar, the working classes are sottish, ignorant and lazy—so we sum up the crowd. We ourselves, of course, stand outside the crowd and are no part of it. If we could only imaginatively see ourselves in the crowd and take ourselves as a sample of it, our political, social reform and religious activities might be a good deal more successful, for then we should understand the needs of the crowd, because in the crowd we were studying ourselves.

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"Jesus was moved with compassion, because they fainted." Oh, that hungry, fainting, helpless crowd—what a problem it is! There are some who think the crowd can be made happy by building up a brand new order of society out of bricks baked of the clay of Utopia. We need only to see that the crowd has its regular supply of bread and butter, and it will be satisfied and smiling. The needs of the crowd are not so easily satisfied. You cannot abolish sickness, death, sin, by Act of Parliament. Let Parliament and county councils do everything in their power to improve social conditions and develop the intelligence of the people; but when all is said and done, the great need of the crowd is shepherding. Who are to be the shepherds? It must be men who look on the crowd with the eyes of Jesus, who with the ears of Jesus hear the moans and the inarticulate cries of the crowd that feels its urgent need of something, but often does not know what the something is. How much one wise and compassionate shepherd can do for the fainting and scattered sheep! He can guard the flock against ravening wolves and against those false shepherds whose only interest in the sheep is their fleeces. He can feed the sheep with the food that will nourish them. Perhaps the greatest benefit he can bestow on the sheep is to restrain them, and defend them against their own wild wanderings from the fold. It is for the churches to train shepherds, not only for service in the churches themselves, which are the spiritual sheep-folds, but to be with the sheep in the pastures and on the hill-sides. Which, being interpreted, means that

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men in whom is the Spirit of the Chief Shepherd are needed as labour leaders, as captains of industry, and as members of Parliament and municipal councils. Only the man who can separate the man and the woman from the crowd can minister to the crowd's deepest needs and convert the crowd from being a many-headed monster into a family of brothers and sisters linked to each other by the bonds of natural affection.

IV.—THE PEOPLE'S "AMEN, AMEN!"

"And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, amen, with lifting up their hands, and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord, with their faces to the ground" (Neh. viii. 6).

THE people's "Amen, amen!" Do we realise how important it is that when the preacher "blesses the Lord, the great God," all the people should answer "Amen, amen"? That was a wonderful service which Nehemiah describes. It lasted from morning unto mid-day, and nobody complained of the length of the service. People who occupy pulpits might take to heart the verse in which we are told of the men who "caused the people to understand the law," and "read in the book of the law of God distinctly, and gave the sayings and caused them to understand the reading." The point of the text is, however, that the people listened with ears eagerly attentive, and they signified not only their approval, but their acceptance of the messages, and their determination to practise what they had heard, by answering "Amen, amen!"

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We want the "Amen, amen!" spirit in our churches to-day. How it would help the preacher! The evangelical preacher does not stand above the people as a man apart clothed with the exclusive authority of priestly office, talking down to the people, who are expected simply to shut their eyes and open their mouths and take whatever he pleases to give them. The evangelical preacher is a brother beloved, who thinks with the people, feels with them, and endeavours to direct their thoughts and feelings into helpful channels. The people must come, however, in the "Amen, amen!" spirit, if they are to receive the blessing. Too often, in these days, they come listlessly, reluctantly, as to the discharge of a duty. They are critical and seem to have little or no appetite for the food with which they are being fed. The preacher is only a man like themselves, and if there is no answering "Amen, amen!" from the people's hearts, his own heart is likely to be chilled and his inspiration damped down.

When the good man of the house grows critical about his food, when nothing that is set before him pleases him, when the joint is served half raw or burned to a cinder, or the porridge at breakfast is half-cooked and lumpy, and the coffee is badly brewed and lukewarm, the wife who is a wise woman, whose "price is far above rubies," does not argue with him. She says, "John is evidently run down. He is in bad condition. He has not been taking sufficient exercise. He needs a tonic or a holiday," and she begins to contrive, to manœuvre how she can induce

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him to take exercise, or a tonic, or a holiday. It is exactly so in the churches when the people have lost the "Amen, amen!" spirit, and have developed to the sharpest point the faculty of criticism. They need exercise and a tonic. They need "the practice of the presence of God," the individual soul-wrestling. They need to recover their relish for Bible reading, their fervency in prayer, their quiet meditation upon the deep things of God. In these days of increasing stress and strain, of hurry and worry; these days of hustling and bustling, of multiplied distractions in the way of recreations, piquant literature and amusements of every kind, it is only too easy to lose the "Amen, amen!" spirit, to get out of touch with God, and to become spiritually anæmic with the consequent flabbiness of fibre and petulant irritability. The problem of the hour in the religious world is to discover how to revive the "Amen, amen!" spirit. We have splendid churches, reverent and stately services, magnificent choirs, organs with the latest thing in modern improvements, learned and eloquent preachers; but there is something lacking in the congregation, that prevents the congregation receiving the inspiration that should come to them from the hours of Sabbath worship. Let me suggest that it is only in the private cultivation of the devout life that they will recover the "Amen, amen!" spirit. Thomas Brooks, the Puritan preacher, in a memoir of his wife, tells how she was many a whole day "pouring out her soul before God for the nation, for Zion and the great concerns of her own soul." Of another lady he says, "She was much in secret duties, in close communion

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with God, and this did very much enrich her, and advance her in spiritual experience, when she had once found the secret of enjoying Christ behind the door. She was a Christian all over. She was a Christian in profession and a Christian in practice; a Christian in lip and a Christian in life; a Christian in word and a Christian in work; a Christian in show and a Christian in power and spirit. She drove a thriving private business with her Saviour." We shall not get that revival of religion in the churches and in the nation till we get "the practice of the presence of God," and the driving of a thriving "private business with the Saviour" in the homes. It is then that the people in the church will answer "Amen, amen!" and the inspiration that goes out from them as a cloud to the pulpit will return to them in showers of blessing.

V.—THE FIRE IN THE BONES

"Then I said, I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name. But His word was in mine heart, as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay" (Jer. xx. 9).

JEREMIAH is the most autobiographical of the prophets. His prophecies are wrung from him by the pressure of painful personal experiences. Judah in his time was like men in a boat approaching the rapids. Jeremiah was with them in the boat, and in an agony of apprehension pointed out the danger, but the men were drunken revellers and let the boat drift, brutally ill-using the troublesome interrupter in order to silence him.

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Sometimes Jeremiah lost heart as he saw Judah with heart hardened and ears deaf to the messages that came to her from Jehovah. He longed for a lonely hut in the waste wilderness where he might be out of sight and out of hearing of what was going on in Jerusalem, where king, priests and nobles were setting the worst example to the common people, and lent greedy ears to the false prophets who prophesied pleasant things, and cried, "Peace, peace," when there was no peace. Jeremiah was not gifted with great patience, or with the sweetest of tempers. He was not a mealy-mouthed prophet. If you are trying to save a madman from murder or suicide you resort to rough methods. In the chapter from which the text is taken Jeremiah is put into the stocks as a warning that he must either keep his mouth shut, or must not speak so as to offend the susceptibilities of people whose policy was the policy of the ostrich. They preferred to bury their heads in the sand rather than look at the dangers that were menacing them. Jeremiah in the stocks rages and roars like a forest lion captured and caged. He has preached, and preached, and preached, but preached in vain, and recalls how he had been tempted to preach no more. "But His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing and I could not stay."

Of course he could not stay. What prophet of God could ever be silent? No great reform has ever been carried out without the experience of Jeremiah being repeated. Jeers and sneers, insult and contempt, are the lot of the reformer and the philanthropist.

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Columbus, who gave a new world to Spain, was put in chains, the reformers of religion were burned at the stake, the Puritans were clapped into dungeons, the abolitionists of the slave trade in England were denounced as lunatics and robbers for half a century. John Brown was hanged when he staked his life on the venture of rousing the Northern States to a sense of the iniquity of slavery. The temperance pioneers in England were the butt of every drunken wit, and were cruelly caricatured even by such a kind-hearted novelist as Dickens. It was not pleasant to be labelled as a hypocritical Stiggins. General Booth, when he set out to capture for Christ the classes who had ceased to be touched by the ministrations of any church, was the laughing-stock of the country, and the bands of Salvationists were legitimate game for the violent horseplay of the rowdy hooligan.

Would it have been strange if any of these reformers, in a fit of depression and pessimism at the apparent hopelessness of their crusade, stung by the opposition, the contempt and persecution by the very people in whose interest they were working, had said, "We have done our best. We have delivered our message again and again. Why should we go on working for the ungrateful and the wilfully blind? Our conscience is clear. Now we will wash our hands of the whole business, and seek our rest in some lodge in the wilderness." If such men yielded there would be no hope for the world, but they cannot yield. "His word was in their heart as a burning fire shut up in their bones, and they could not stay."

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Jeremiah died a stranger in a strange land, still faithfully delivering his messages to the exiles, who, even in their banishment, would not listen to them, and he was buried in a nameless grave. But his work was not wasted. He saved Israel, and Israel, in after years, recognised how great a prophet in Jeremiah God had given to her. When Jesus came and His wonderful works and words set people talking, some said it was Jeremiah come again. So it will always be with those to whom the word of God is a flaming fire. They in Christ's stead are the world's saviours, and some day the world will give them their honour. Let no faithful worker for God give way to discouragement; let him work on, and he will have his sure reward.

VI.—HEAVENLY THRIFT

“Lay not up for yourselves treasure upon earth But lay up for yourselves treasure in Heaven” (Matt. vi. 19, 20).

THE cynical man of the world curls his lips into a scornful smile when he hears the counsel, “Lay not up for yourselves treasure on earth.” Did he not, in his boyhood, read the books of Samuel Smiles, and gather from them that the chief duty of men in England was to succeed in life, which means laying up treasure on earth? Is not our whole social system based on the notion that the laying up of earthly treasures, the safeguarding of them, and their exchange and transmission, is the one object to be kept always in view? The man who “succeeds in life” is the man whom everybody honours, and his success makes everybody charitable

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towards any little peccadilloes he may have, or to anything that looks dubious in the means by which his success was attained. Christ's measurement of success, however, is not the world's measurement. Success with Him means the man's success in the making of himself, and not his success in the making of money. In making the money he may lose himself and then, judged by Christ's standard, though he lives in a mansion, and drives in a motor car, the man is a bankrupt. When a successful man dies, the world asks, "What has he left?" The angels ask, "What has he sent on?" His will on earth may mean half-a-million in death duties to the Exchequer; his will in Heaven may be a blank sheet.

But "lay up for yourselves treasure in Heaven." Six hundred thousand old people are now enjoying their pensions provided by the Government from the fund laid up by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Even those who opposed the Old Age Pensions Bill will wish the old people a happy enjoyment of their good fortune. But what, after all, is five shillings a week, or five pounds, or fifty pounds, a week, for the matter of that, as provision for old age? It will provide porridge and a buttered crust, it will keep a roof tree over the home, it will remove the dark cloud of poverty that embittered men and women who in their declining years, after lives of ceaseless toil, saw no prospect ahead but the open doors of the workhouse. But "man does not live by bread alone." He needs provision for the mind, provision for the heart, provision for the soul, if he is to enjoy a cheerful old age. Is there anything more tragic on earth than the old age of a starved

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heart and a starved soul? Many successful men have let the rust of gold eat into their hearts, and when such men retire from business to leisure they are of all men the most miserable. In our family relationships we should be laying up treasure in Heaven. All human love that opens and warms the heart is treasure being laid up in Heaven. Is there any more miserable spectacle than the old age of the selfish man or woman, whose thought has only been for themselves and who have alienated the respect and affection of even their own children? But what more beautiful sight on earth is there than that of Darby and Joan who, at their golden wedding, gather around them their children and grand-children, and reap a golden harvest of love from the seed of love that they sowed in their children's hearts? After all the best old age pension for Darby is just Joan and the children whom God gave them.

If we are laying up treasure in Heaven we do not have to wait till we reach Heaven before we enter upon its enjoyment. The beauty of a heavenly old age pension is that we begin to receive it, and to receive it on a scale of heavenly generosity, the very moment that we begin laying it up.

"The Kingdom of God is within you." As the world counts success we may have failed, but as Heaven counts success we have gloriously succeeded. Do not we know at a glance the people who have treasure laid up in Heaven? Their lives are radiant. They are "fat and flourishing" of soul, though their tables are scantily provided. The best things of life are not so unevenly

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city, and unless he takes his part in saving it, all that Parliament and county and borough councils can do will be in vain. There is a growing tendency to expect the "great and eminent men" to save the city off their own bat, so to speak. You might as well expect the officers of an army to win battles without the rank and file.

Let us take a look at three or four of the questions concerning the saving of the city that are now being hotly debated. There is the temperance question. Governments devise Licensing Bills and the House of Lords rejects them. What does the poor wise man say? "I will pass a Licensing Bill of my own without a time limit and without compensation, and no House of Lords on earth can veto it." There is the education question. Churches are quarrelling as to who shall bring up the boys and girls in the religion of their parents. What does the poor wise man say? "I will educate my children in my own religion by my example and their mother's." Unless the children are so "educated in the religion of their parents" I have not much hope of either day-school teacher or Sunday-school teacher succeeding in the business. The child should be daily and hourly influenced by the example of the parents. If they are a Christian man and woman they should exhale an atmosphere of cheerful piety that will be in the home as the fragrance of roses, and children breathing that atmosphere cannot but be educated in the religion of their parents.

Then with regard to the "arrested progress of the Church," and how the arrest can be arrested and the

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Then with regard to the "arrested progress of the Church," and how the arrest can be arrested and the

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Churches started on the march again. What does the poor wise man say? He says, "I will cultivate my own soul with intensive cultivation. I will do my utmost so that any chill in the spiritual temperature of the Church, any slackening of its moral fibre, any half-heartedness in its Christian activities, shall at any rate not be traceable to shortcomings on my part." Not long ago I heard a minister tell of a revival at a church in a highly respectable suburb, at which he was asked to conduct a mission. On arriving his host, a deacon J.P., threw all the cold water he could on his expectations. On the Sunday morning, however, as soon as he entered the pulpit, he was conscious of something electric in the air. It became evident that there was the power and the presence of the Holy Spirit. Before the service closed, five people expressed their desire to commit their lives to the Master and devote their lives to His service, and among the five were two young men, sons of the pessimist J.P. What was the secret? It was found that five old men, among the poorest of the congregation, had agreed weeks before to meet together daily for supplication that the Spirit of the Lord might be poured out at that mission. They were "the poor wise men," and such men and such women in every church would soon create a revival in a natural spontaneous way.

The poor wise men and women who live lives of simple goodness are the salt that saves the community from moral putrefaction. Ten just men would have saved Sodom, but Sodom lacked the ten men, and it perished in a rain of fire. Let no man or woman think

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that they are so unimportant that they do not count. They may be the saviours of the city.

VIII.—NO MORE SEA

“And there was no more sea ” (Rev. xxi. 1).

To a people whose glory is in their supremacy on the seas, who sing “Rule Britannia, Britannia rules the waves,” who draw their wealth from the ends of the earth in ships that fly their flag, a heaven in which there is no more sea seems a heaven incomplete. To the Jews, however, as to most Orientals of the ancient world, the sea was a treacherous monster, never to be trusted, smiling with waves lightly rippled in the sunshine when you embarked for a voyage, and when you were scarcely out of sight of the shore rising in tempest and tossing the cockleshell of a ship ruthlessly on to a rock, or on to some hostile shore, where, if you escaped the waves, you were barbarously received by wreckers, who if they did not murder you enslaved you. The sea became the symbol of all that was most faithless and merciless. “The wicked,” said Isaiah, “are like the troubled sea that casts up mire and dirt.” Those who were on the sea thought longingly of a safe haven.

The sea even to-day has not lost its terrors. The ocean liner is the last thing in luxury to the passenger with money, but there is never a day of storm but what the sea reaps its dread harvest of lives. Norman Duncan, in one of his Newfoundland and Labrador stories, tells how two lads went out in a fishing boat,

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and were caught in a fog and drawn into a resistless current, which they knew would dash their boat to pieces on a rock or ice. "The sea 've cotched us, the sea 've cotched us," they cried, as they drifted swiftly to their doom. Rudyard Kipling wrote:—

"If blood be the price of admiralty,
O God, we have paid the price."

In the Tate Gallery one of the pictures that attracts the most attention is "Hopeless Dawn." There is a spread breakfast table, and the candle burned low in the socket tells of a sleepless night. Morning has come after a night of storm, and a fishing boat is missing. An old wrinkled grannie sits in a chair, and kneeling on the floor with her head on the grannie's lap is the fisherman's wife, a pathetic picture of despair. Even to-day the ocean proves himself a "mighty monster."

"And there was no more sea." What does it mean? It means that in the Jerusalem above "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." While we are in the flesh, however, there is always the sea, and always the danger of moral and spiritual shipwreck. We are all on the sea. In olden times there was no mariner's compass, and the vessels had to hug the land as far as possible, but the danger of hugging the land might be even greater than that of sailing out into the ocean. To-day, with steel-built vessels and scientific construction, the results of

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centuries of evolution, with the seas thoroughly charted, with steam power and perfect machinery, with the mariner's compass and other instruments to guide him, the navigator has reduced the perils of the sea to a minimum, but there are perils all the same. He may go to sea in a coffin ship with machinery that long ago ought to have been scrapped. The navigator may be incompetent or careless. The magnetic needle may be deflected either by the metal of the ship or by the magnetic powers of rocks, when the ship is near the land. One of the most terrible wrecks of recent years is believed to have been caused by the magnetic influence of the rocks into the neighbourhood of which the ship had been steered during a fog. Then there are shifting currents that may carry a ship in foggy weather out of her course.

Are there not analogous perils in the voyage of life on which we are all engaged? We have a chart, indeed, in the Word of God, but we often roll up the chart and fling it on to a top shelf where it remains dusty and forgotten. We have a compass, in the light of conscience, but the hand of the compass is easily deflected by the magnetism of powerful temptations. We get into dangerous currents and drift on to rocks or into shoals, and when we strike we wonder; but it would have been more wonderful if we had not struck. How can we make sure of reaching "the desired haven"? There is a Pilot who is waiting and willing and eager to come on board, if we will let Him. I read of a Scotch pilot who had so often carried ships up the St. Lawrence that he was never at a loss, even in the thickest

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fog, and said he could take a boat, he believed, even if he were blindfolded.

“With Christ in the vessel
We laugh at the storm.”

He may be an invisible Pilot, but He will carry us safely through all the perils of the sea, and when we reach the desired haven we shall “see our Pilot face to face.”

APPENDIX II

ILLUSTRATED ADDRESSES TO CHILDREN

FOR the Illustrated Addresses to Children that follow I am indebted to the kindness of the authors whose names appear, with the exception of the last. Rev. E. W. Lewis, M.A., B.D., has published a volume of his children's addresses, "The Invisible Companion, and other Stories for Children," through James Clarke & Co., price 1s. 6d. net, and the two addresses by Rev. J. G. Stevenson are taken, somewhat condensed, from his volume "The Challenge," published by James Clarke & Co., price 2s. 6d. net. The address by Rev. W. Kingscote Greenland is condensed, with his permission, from a published report. Mr. Greenland is most popular throughout the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion as the author of the weekly *Methodist Recorder* children's article, "From Eight to Sixteen." That weekly article, and the volumes of Messrs. Lewis and Stevenson, are models of the methods of talking and writing that fascinate children. My friend Mr. Basil Mathews is a student of child psychology who well understands the art of finding ways into the child's mind.

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I.—CARRYING A CROSS

BY REV. E. W. LEWIS, M.A., B.D.

THE other morning I came into my study a little bit earlier than usual, and I saw a very young sparrow sitting on the window-sill, and looking exceedingly down in the dumps. The window was open, and as I walked towards it I said in a low, friendly sort of voice so as not to disturb him, "Hullo, my boy, and what is the matter, pray?"

He evidently wanted someone to talk to, for he did not fly away as I came still nearer, but sniffled in his nose a bit as if he had been crying. So I sat down on the ledge of the window, and without looking at him—for sparrows do not like to be looked at when they have been crying—I said in the most comfortable, confiding voice I could, "Well, tell me about it."

Then he began to make a funny sort of noise; sometimes it was like a muffled twitter, and sometimes it was like a lot of jerky little snorts, which you probably would not have understood, but it was quite plain to me, for I have studied the language of sparrows almost as much as I have studied Hindustani. And what he said was this:

"I think it is really too bad; yesterday evening father and mother went off somewhere, and left me, and they haven't come back this morning, and I have searched all about for them, and I cannot find them. I am alone in the world"; and he stopped a little because of a lump in his throat, which you boys and girls know all about.

"Dear, dear!" I said, just to give him time.

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"I have nobody, now," he went on, "to bring me food, or to show me where to find it, and every bird I meet seems to want to pick a quarrel with me, and fight, and I can't fight, and there is nobody to stand up for me. And the nights are getting so long, and are beginning to get cold, and I do not know what I shall do. I wish I could die."

He was clearly in a very bad way.

"Come, come," I said to him in my best coaxing manner, "you are young and strong; you have a sharp beak and two quick eyes, and a fine crop of feathers; and you have had a wonderful stroke of luck in finding out this garden, which is a perfect storehouse of treasures for you. Things are not nearly so bad as you make out. Blow your father and mother, and keep your tail up."

He still looked very limp and woe-begone, however, and snorted out:

"I don't think anybody has so rough a time of it as I have."

"Oh, nonsense!" I said, rather sternly. "Look at that spider down there on the top of the laurel bush; somebody smashed his web to bits this morning, and he has got to weave another, and he has only got a certain amount of stuff to do it with, and if this web gets broken, he will have to starve to death."

"Oh," says the sparrow, "that is very hard."

"I should think it is hard," I replied; "and see that old bluebottle crouching behind that ivy stalk; all his friends have left him. He is too old and fat to help himself; he is so blind he can scarcely see; he is frightened to death for fear you will catch sight of him;

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and if he gets inside this room of mine I shall chase him round with a duster ; and the winter is coming and he has not got a nest, nor even feathers."

"Poor soul!" murmured the sparrow. "It must be very hard to be old, and hated, and forsaken."

"And look at that butterfly," I continued, warming up like I do when I am half-way through a sermon. "Look at him; he looks gay and happy, doesn't he? And yet if there is a frost to-night, it will pinch his little heart, and he will drop down among the soil and the dead leaves."

"Poor thing!" sighed the sparrow.

"And look at me," I cried.

"You?" chirped the sparrow.

"Yes, me! Everybody has their troubles, and yours are a fleabite to them. Here am I on Saturday morning, and I have got to talk to some boys and girls to-morrow, and I haven't a single idea in my head to say to them, and they'll never like me any more if I miss a Sunday. There's real trouble, if you like!"

"Tell 'em about me," he said, and his eyes twinkled and he seemed to be getting quite perky.

"Great idea!" I cried. "Here, wait a bit"; and I slipped downstairs before the breakfast table had been cleared, and made him some crumbs which he ate out of the palm of my hand. When he had finished, I said:

"Do you see that glass dish of water down there on the grass? That's for the dog; but you can go and stand on the rim and wash your breakfast down; only watch out for the cat."

And down he flew.

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Some of you boys and girls are a bit like that sparrow, sometimes. You are inclined to think that you have a very bad time of it, and are very hardly done to, and that nobody could have such parents as yours for sending you errands when you want to play, or keeping you at lessons when you want to be larking, and you look glum, and you grouse, and grumble, and imagine that there is nobody has so heavy a cross to carry as you have.

Oh! if you could only see the crosses that other people have to carry!

If you could only see the burdens that lie all the time on the shoulders of your father and mother, and on the shoulders, too, the little shoulders of other children sometimes. You would begin to see how fortunate and blessed you are.

There was once a girl whose cross was so heavy that she fretted a great deal over it. One night she dreamed that it was taken away, and that she was visited by an angel who talked to her about carrying crosses.

"Everyone," said the angel, "carries a cross. But you shall have your choice."

So the girl was taken to where the crosses of the world are kept. She saw them—great huge heavy crosses which, when she touched them, she could not move. In a corner stood a beautiful tiny cross.

"May I carry that one?"

"That one?" said the angel, "certainly. It is the very cross you were fretting over. It is the lightest cross we have in the whole place."

And I should not wonder if the same is not true of some of you (Luke ix. 14).

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II.—THE MAGIC PEN

BY REV. E. W. LEWIS, M.A., B.D.

I HAVE a quill pen which came out of the left wing of a grey goose. This is a long time ago, for I myself have used the pen until it won't write any more. But I have not thrown it away, for—if I may whisper it in your little ear—it is a Magic Pen. In children's stories you will always notice that anything wonderful is spelt with a capital letter. I am afraid that it is not a Magic Pen when I am writing with it, but it is magic whenever I put it behind my ear.

This has been one of my great secrets for many years, and one day I will tell you how I discovered it. Whenever I put the Magic Pen behind my ear, off I go quicksticks into fairyland! And so it happened on New Year's Eve I was sitting in my room late at night, and very tired, and I placed the pen, which I had been using as a book-marker, behind my ear. No sooner had I done so than my study, with its books and mantelpiece, and pictures, and the dog stretched on the hearthrug, suddenly disappeared, and I found myself in what turned out to be the entrance-hall of a most wonderful castle. And the door opened and in came a shining personage, whom I at once knew to be the Lord of the Manor; he carried in his arms a huge sheaf of flowers; and he came forward to me smiling.

"My name is Time," he said to me in a beautiful, kind voice.

"This is a fine old place," I replied, scarcely knowing what to say to him. "May I ask its name?"

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"It is called," he said, "the House of Ages! This hall in which we are now standing is in the centre; on that side lie all the Ages that have been, on this side lie all the Ages that are to come."

"What a wonderful place!" I said, in a soft, awesome voice.

"Come and let me show you a little," said Time, and he put his foot on the first step of a marble staircase. I followed him. When we got to the landing, I found myself standing at the end of a long corridor, stretching right away in the distance in a mist of light; it was for all the world like a corridor in a big hotel, I thought; and there seemed to be a good many rooms with closed doors. Just near at hand was a room or which the door was not quite closed, and before this one Time stopped. "Let us go in here," he said, and he led the way. I noticed on the door a number, like you see on the bedrooms in an hotel; and the number was 1908. So I knew why the door was nearly closed.

We went in, and all around the room there hung pictures in long rows. Time was silent, and I looked first at one picture and then at the other, and another, and another, and I found that they were all portraits of myself! Some I rather liked, for in this one my face was very happy, and in that one a kind look shone in my eyes.

"You remember this?" said Time. "This was You when you won that golf match after a great fight; you were nearly beaten, but you stuck to it, and just managed to pull it off."

Then we passed on.

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"And this was You after you had spent the afternoon romping with the children; you see how dusty your knees are, and your coat-collar is turned up at the back, and your tie is all out of place, through playing bears."

"What a jolly room this is!" I said to myself. But I am afraid that we soon came to the end of the nice portraits.

"You remember this one?" asked Time. Yes, I did; it was a very sour, angry, ugly face; it was one day when I had not been able to have my own way, and had got into a nasty temper—ratty, as the boys call it.

"Did I ever really look like that?" I cried; for it was a proud, scornful face, and you could almost see the unkind, cutting word coming out through the lips. I began to be ashamed. I looked round to see where the door was. I tried to hurry Time on.

"No, don't let us look at that," I said, as he stopped in front of another. "I am sure the door will shut, and we shall be locked in, unless we are quick. It is very kind of you to take this trouble, but you will be tired."

But he led me round the room, and before it was all over my heart was very sad and heavy because I had looked upon the record of so much that was selfish, and thoughtless, and cruel, and ugly.

Then I heard a clock somewhere out in the corridor striking the hour. It was twelve o'clock. I saw the door begin to shut. We were just in time; we slipped through, and, with the last stroke of the bell, "click" went the lock which could never be unbolted.

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And as this door closed behind us for ever I saw another door right opposite to us on the other side of the corridor standing ajar, as if it had just opened. And I read its number. It was 1909.

“Ah!” I said with a cry of joy, “that is the New Year.” “Yes,” replied Time, “it is. Would you like to see it.” And he took me just inside. It was a room very like the one we had left. And its walls were covered over with long rows of picture-frames. But I saw that there was nothing in them yet. They were empty frames waiting for the pictures; and I knew that I was the painter, busy every day with my life, who was to put the pictures in.

No word was spoken, but every boy and girl will know what was in my heart as I looked along those silent walls, and those vacant picture-frames.

Then I found myself saying in a low voice, quickly, with a burning at my heart, and a hope shining like a bright light within me: “They shall all be happy, jolly, kind, beautiful, and good this year! None of your ugly ones; none of your bad-tempered ones; none of your selfish ones! I am not good-looking to start with, but I mean to take jolly good care not to make it worse by unkind thoughts, and sinful desires, and unlovely deeds. I will be very careful. I will make the very best of myself every time. I will——”

And then suddenly I awoke, to find that Jock, the Aberdeen terrier, had got tired of waiting for me to come out of my dreams, had jumped up on to my knee, and in licking my cheek with his ticklish tongue had knocked the Magic Pen from behind my ear. It was

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already New Year's Day. A Happy New Year to you all! If you have read this story carefully you will know how to make it happy (Ps. xc. 9).

III.—THE YOUNG HEART FOR JESUS

BY REV. W. KINGSCOTE GREENLAND

[*Summarized, with introduction, by H. JEFFS.*]

A SPEAKER who "can do anything he likes" with children is Rev. W. Kingscote Greenland. His addresses, with their illustrations, are inimitable, because they are so completely the expression of Mr. Greenland's personality and of his absolute self-identification with the children to whom he is talking. In this address he urged that people should be Christians while they are young because it is easy. He told how, as a young minister, he was ambitious to play some musical instrument at concerts, and bought a beautiful violin. He took lessons, but found he was not getting on, and when he pressed his teacher to tell him if he should ever be able to play, the teacher, said Mr. Greenland, began, "'Well ——' 'Honour bright,' I said. 'Must I tell you?' 'You must.' 'Well, you never will.' 'I thought so.' He was quite right. I never have. They never ask me to play at church socials. Now, boys and girls, there were many reasons why I was unable to learn the violin, although I tried, and put a lot of time into it. One reason was: I began to learn too late. My joints were stiff, my fingers were not—What is the word, boys and girls?—['supple']—that is a good word. I did not expect it. Another. Well, they were not loose enough." Against his own failure,

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he placed the case of a girl of ten who used to play to him, and who was doing one splendid thing—she was learning while a child, when her little fingers could be moved freely, and her mind was free from a thousand things.

Another reason why people should be Christians while they were young was because they were never so generous as when they were children. Jesus wanted them to give Him something, and Mr. Greenland skilfully extracted from the youthful audience that the something was themselves. He said :

“ I was in a house the other day where there was an old-fashioned little girl. There are only about six left—she is one. I will tell you how I know. She was telling me of a birthday present she was going to give to her father. It was an old-fashioned present—a pair of slippers. In the dear old days they used to give us slippers, now they give us typewriters and other murderous things. I asked her a question. It troubled her. I did not know what was the matter. Perhaps I had got up that morning on the wrong side of the bed. Which is the wrong side of the bed, by the way ? [‘ The left.’] I’ll tell you—it’s *the linoleum side !* The cold side. Anyhow, I said to the girl : ‘ You are going to give a pair of slippers to your father ? ’ ‘ Yes.’ ‘ Where will you get the money to buy them ? ’ She opened her eyes like saucers, and she said : ‘ Why, *father will give me the money.*’ And just for half a minute I was silent as I thought the dear man will buy his own birthday present. I was not in the house when she gave him the slippers. But I suppose when the father

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came down in the morning there was the parcel between his knife and fork. You know the kind of parcel a girl wraps up. *You girls cannot pack.* We boys are the packers—though we are not Chicago packers. You know the sort of parcel, three times too much string, and then a lot of pins, and the heel poking out of one end and the toe the other. But no matter how it was packed, the father loved his little girl for her gift, although he had had to pay for it. She had not anything in the world that he had not given her.

“That is just what I want to say as I finish. You have not got anything of your own to give to Jesus Christ. You can only give Him back what belongs to Him. When Christ says, ‘Give Me something,’ and you say, ‘I have nothing to give,’ He further says, ‘I will put you back into your own care and keeping—into your own proprietorship, and you may give yourself to whom you like, and if you really love Me for love’s sake, you may give yourself back to Me’ (1 Sam. ii. 11; and Matt. xix. 13—15).

IV.—CONCERNING A TOAD

BY REV. J. G. STEVENSON

A BOY named Huggins caught a toad, took it home and fed it, and got quite fond of it. This was during his school holidays. When he had to return to school he cried because he would not be allowed to take his pet with him. It happened that the Duke of Wellington, who beat Napoleon at the battle of Waterloo, was going down the road. He saw Huggins crying and

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asked what was the matter. The boy told his sad story. The Duke looked quite troubled, put his hand on Huggins' shoulder and said, "Never mind, my lad, nobody shall hurt your toad while you are away. The day before you go to school you bring it up to my house and we will look after it for you, until the holidays come again." Huggins went to school happy, but more than once during the term he received a letter with a crest on the envelope, and when he opened it, it read, "Field-Marshal the Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to Master Huggins, and begs to inform him that his toad is quite well."

You cannot help smiling at Huggins, but wasn't it just splendid of the Duke to look after the toad? Yet some girls, if they saw a toad, would say, "Nasty, ugly thing!" and run away, and some boys would call out "Look at that ugly beast. Let's get some stones and shy at him." The best children are kind to every animal they know. What happens to the cat while you are away? Children sometimes, when they return from the summer holiday, count pussy's ribs and say to one another, "Dear me! she was quite fat when we went away!" It is not fair that people should behave in that way even to a cat.

V.—THE ROSE AND THE EXPRESS WORM

BY REV. J. G. STEVENSON

THE first rose of summer was nodding saucily as if to say, "Was there ever so fine a flower in the garden

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before?" She suddenly saw a little red thing sticking out of the earth. It twisted and twirled and got longer, and when the rose asked "Whoever are you?" "I," came the answer, "am the Express Worm." The Worm begged the Rose to give him a summer lodging in one of her petals, and promised he would defend her against her enemies. She hesitated, but the Worm slithered up the tree, and curled up in the centre of the blossom. She soon began to feel not at all well, for the Worm began to eat one of her leaves, and when she asked him to move, he just munched another petal. She asked her friend the Bee to help her. The Bee looked solemn and said, "Let me see. Why, that's no Express Worm, that is Sin." The Rose said, "Oh no, he told me his name himself." "Stupid!" retorted the Bee, "Sin never gives his real name. He always pretends that he is someone else. What were you doing when he came?" "I was feeling proud, and I didn't think there was so much of him. There was only a very little of him that peered from the ground at first." "It is always like that," was the answer. "To be naughty always gives sin a chance. And sin takes in everybody, when it promises them revenge against their enemies. And no sin seems so big at first as it becomes afterwards. But keep your petals up; you will know better another time." The Bee advised the Rose to pray for pardon to Someone who is often called the "Rose of Sharon." The West-wind blew and swept the Express Worm right away.

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VI.—“AS IN A MIRROR”

BY BASIL MATHEWS, B.A.

“We all, reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, become transformed into the same image” (2 Cor. iii. 18, R. V.).

(1) TAKE a bar of soft iron. Put it among iron filings and it does nothing. Put the soft iron on to a magnet and that iron bar draws the filings. It has become a magnet by contact with a magnet.

(2) Photographic plate: a perfect blank. Take off the cap of the camera and then the plate has received a perfect picture of what was in front of it. Inside your head is a brain more sensitive than a photographic plate, taking in pictures faster than a cinematograph.

(3) Story of “Silas Marner.” The weaver caring only for gold becomes hard like the gold. Loses the gold and finds golden-haired child. So becomes kind, trustful, helpful, considerate.

(4) “The Great Stone Face” (story told by Nathaniel Hawthorne). In a Swiss valley was a village. Above was a mountain, on a rock of which was carved a fine, strong, calm, loving face. The people said that some day a man would come to the village with a face like the Great Stone Face, and would lead them and make them happy and strong. A boy, Ernest, was told this, and always watched for that man, looking up to the rock and then at the face of every stranger who came to the village. But he was always disappointed. At last, one day, when he was a young man addressing a meeting, a man jumped up and cried out, “Behold! Ernest is himself the likeness of the Great Stone Face.”

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He had reflected as a mirror its glory and was gradually changed to the same image.

VII.—“YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN”

BY BASIL MATHEWS, B.A.

BEING born is just coming into life.

We all want to see life.

Point: To be born simply to let the Light of the World shine on you.

(1) You discover in the garden a thing like a brown torpedo. Last summer it was a caterpillar. God tells it that it must be born again. So in the spring it will come up unto the sun and let the sun shine on it and will then be born again to fly over the tree-tops rejoicing as a butterfly.

(2) The bulb in the garden lets the sun shine on it and warm it, and in the spring it is born again into a beautiful, brilliant flower. Even the blossom on the apple tree is born again into lovely fruit.

“Ye must be born again,” therefore, means let your whole life get warm, glowing and growing into blossom and coming to fruit in the sunshine of Jesus’ love (John iii. 7).

VIII.—THE RIGHT WAY AND THE WRONG WAYS

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the Way” (John xiv. 6).

IN a new fairy-book I found a story of a boy and girl, brother and sister, who lived just outside the frontier of a country that was ruled by a very beautiful and kind princess. They heard how anyone who visited

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the princess's castle was received in the most hospitable way by the princess, and was sent away laden with gifts. The boy and girl thought how much they would like to go to the castle and see the princess. One day, when they had a holiday, they slipped over the frontier, and walked on and on until they came to a place where many roads and lanes met. They did not know which was the right road to take; but there was a sign-post with a board pointing in the direction of each road and lane. They read the direction on each board; but what was their surprise to find that the direction on each pointer was no direction at all, but simply these words—"THIS IS NOT THE WAY TO THE CASTLE." They sat down in despair, not knowing what to do, until a kind old gentleman came along, and when they told him their wish and their difficulty, he took each of them by the hand and led them along the right road until they came to the castle. There they found that the princess was even more beautiful and gracious and kind than they had imagined, and they had a royal time as her guests.

Every boy and girl should have a still more eager desire to find their way to the Heavenly City, and to the Great King, who reigns over the city, and who is kinder and more gracious than the most kind and gracious princess that ever lived. Those that set out on the journey, however, as Christian in "The Pilgrim's Progress," may easily get into a wrong road. There is only one right road; but how many wrong ones! There is One, however, who is willing to be your Guide. Jesus said, "I am the Way." If in trustful

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confidence you will put your hands in His, He will lead you, and you will never miss your way until you enter the gates of the Heavenly City.

There are dangers and difficulties many on the way, and we need a guide. In my house there is a photograph that was taken last July at Grindelwald, in Switzerland, and it shows a group standing on a glacier on the side of a mountain. Those in the group are roped together, and in front of them is a guide with an axe. In the streets of Grindelwald you will see little groups of the guides, each with his axe and a coil of rope. The guides know the dangerous places, and if you entrust yourself to their care they will take you up the mountains and guard you against any danger of falling into a deep crevasse in the ice, or slipping over a cliff, or being buried in an avalanche of snow. While we were at Grindelwald two parties went up the mountains without guides, and in one case two men were killed by falling over a cliff, and in the other one perished on the snow of exhaustion, and another only just escaped with his life. Jesus is a Guide who never will fail to save any who trust themselves to Him, and if the boys and the girls will take Him as their Guide He will lead them over every Hill Difficulty and round every Slough of Despond, until at last they are welcomed home by the Great King in his City of Light.

APPENDIX III

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM GENESIS TO REVELATION

THE illustrations in this Appendix have been selected from a great variety of preachers and volumes. There are a considerable number of original ones by the author and his friends. The illustrations are grouped in the order of the books of the Bible from which the texts are taken. In many cases the text appended is different from that of the sermon in which the illustration was used, but the point illustrated seemed to the author—separated from the sermon—to make the text here selected a more suitable one.

“AND HE DIED”

Archbishop Leighton, in the seventeenth century, tells us of a man who entered a church in Glasgow one day when the same chapter, the fifth Genesis, was being read—the patriarchs who lived for hundreds of years—and the man left the church converted. Archbishop Leighton tells us that what converted him was the perpetual recurrence of the phrase, “And he died” (Gen. v.).—DR. HORTON.

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WRESTLING PRAYER

"There's nae gude done, John, till ye git into the close grups," so said Jeems, the doorkeeper of his father's church, to Dr. John Brown, the immortal author of "Rab and his Friends." None but a Christian of long and deep experience would have said that. It was not a slight and transient touch of the angel of the Lord that gave Jacob the victory at Penue!; the persistent wrestler's words: "I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me," showed the close grip. That was a prevailing prayer (Gen. xxxii. 26).—DR. CUYLER.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

Barrie says in his life of his mother: "Everything that I could do for her I have done since I was a boy. I look back through the years, and I cannot see the smallest thing left undone." Happy son, to feel in that way towards the mother that has vanished out of sight (Exod. xx. 12).—DR. HUGH MACMILLAN.

"WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT?"

When Cyrus Field was laying the first Atlantic cable, the world looked on, doubtful that so strange and bold an undertaking could be carried forward, and the first failure was accepted by most people on both sides of the ocean as only what might have been predicted. But Mr. Field had vision and had courage. He rose undaunted and tried again. When final success came and the message, "What hath God

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wrought?" was flashed beneath the waves from one half the world to the other, the nations had a red-letter day, the glow of which has never faded (Numb. xxiii. 23).—MARGARET E. SANGSTER ("The Little Kingdom of Home").

DISCIPLINE AND OBEDIENCE

I suppose every man here was thrilled in his boyhood days by the story of how Wolfe took Quebec. Who has not read the story alone, perhaps in some field or meadow, or in some lonely corner of the schoolyard, and lived the scene over again—how the boat dropped down the river St. Lawrence, and the one order to the men was this: "Perfect silence." No shout, no whisper, but wait. And then, in the dead silence, the awfully perilous ascent of the heights of Quebec, a company of men through the night winding their way up the narrow pathway. If the enemy once hear them, if the enemy once suspect their presence, nothing can save them, for half-a-dozen men can hold the defile at the other end. Everything depends upon discipline, silence,—the mounting of the heights until the last man is ready for the captain's word to strike the blow. And we know how those men ascended; no sound was heard, up and up while the hours passed on until, when the last man was upon the height, the word was given, and Quebec was taken. It was a perfect picture of the truth that consecration to work expresses itself in discipline and obedience, something that we ever need to remember (Neh. vi. 15).—DR. CAMPBELL MORGAN.

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"LIKE HINDS' FEET"

"He will make my feet like hinds' feet," that is, He will give lightfootedness in the else weary path of plodding life. The stag is the very emblem of elastic, springing ease, of light, bounding gracefulness that clears every obstacle, of sure-footed swiftness. And that is how men who live near God, and have His strength in them because they do, will go along their life-path. What a contrast to the way in which most of us get through our day's work! We plod along, heavy-footed and spiritless, like a ploughman in clayey furrows, with a pound of soil clogging each boot. The monotony of our constantly-recurring small duties, the ups and downs in our spirits, the stiff bits of road that we have all to pass some time, and, as days go on, the stiffer muscles which make us like to walk rather more slowly than we once did—all these make our feet very unlike hinds' feet (Ps. xviii. 33).—DR. MACLAREN.

THE SHEPHERD PSALM

I have seen a woman take some querulous, fretful child, oh, when the little thing was just a bundle of crossness, and, instead of thrashing it—you cannot do without thrashing sometimes, but it does not do always—instead of taking the cross little thing and thrashing it, she just lifted that little bundle of wretchedness, and laid it on her lap and drew it into her bosom, and just hummed away. Do you know what happened? In about ten minutes that little bundle of wretchedness was lying straightened out, drowned in a blissful sleep.

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Oh, that God the Holy Ghost, that nursing mother in God's household, would take somebody to-night that is tired, and weary, and cross, and wretched, and miserable, just draw you into it, and croon, croon into your ear the matchless music of the twenty-third Psalm! (Ps. xxiii. 1).
—REV. JOHN MCNEILL.

“THE LORD IS MY STRENGTH”

“The Lord is my strength.” Is the conjunction presumptuous, to bring the Almighty into communion with me? I made a little toy water-mill the other day for my little girl, and I used the water from the Welsh hills to work it. And we can let in the River of Water of Life to work the little mill of our life, to make all its powers fruitful and effective. Our God is

“A gracious, willing Guest,
While He can find one humble heart
Wherein to rest.”

(Ps. xxvii. 1).—REV. J. H. JOWETT, M.A.

“TASTE AND SEE!”

The Divine regard! It is eleven o'clock on a cold winter night. The stars twinkle in the distance as if they shivered in the cold. The frost is in the air, and there are icicles upon your beard and icicles hang from the houses and from the branches of the trees. You walk hard and yet you are cold. At last you arrive at your own welcome door. The light is in the window; you are met by those you love. The fire laughs in the grate. You take your own armchair. Well, now, do

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you ask your wife, "Will you prove that it is good for me to be here?" Your wife would have a lower opinion of you than ever she had before. "Why, bless you! you are in your own armchair"; the icicles are gone, the supper is on the table. Your wife and children smile upon you, your youngest puts her hand upon your knee and prattles away. Do you want any proof that it is good? I am giving you exactly what I feel. I don't want anyone to prove to me that the Gospel is good—I know it. May the Divine regard beam like the light of heaven upon your troubled breasts! (Ps. xxxiv. 8).—REV. THOMAS JONES, "the Poet Preacher."

"OUT OF A HORRIBLE PIT"

I knew a man who had a bit of board. He said, "When they pulled down the old chapel, I went in and sawed it out; it was the board from the kneeling part of the Communion-rail, where," he said, "I was kneeling when God spake pardon to my soul. Whenever the devil comes and says it was all a delusion, I say, 'Never'; I up and at him with the bit of board on which I was kneeling when God saved me" (Ps. xl. 2).—REV. MARSHALL HARTLEY.

"HOPE THOU IN GOD!"

You may have seen that picture by Mr. Watts, of Hope, in which she is depicted as a blindfolded maiden, with downcast face, sitting upon the axis of the earth. Above her shines the morning star, and already the air

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is blue with translucent light ; she, however, sees it not, whilst the earth is making her difficult progress through a sea of floating cirri. In her left hand she is holding her lyre, every string is broken except one, and she is intently hearkening to its vibration, as though it lay between her and absolute despair. I say to you, my friend, take these words, take this sermon, and above all, take the thought of the great God, from whom you come and to whom you will go, and let that chord vibrate until the bandage is torn from your eyes and you find yourself bathed in morning light (Ps. xlii. 5).—
REV. F. B. MEYER, B.A.

SAIL SOUTHWARDS!

Sometimes, said Dr. W. J. Dawson, the fishermen of the Newfoundland cod fishing fleet are so numbed and dazed by the cold that they are no longer able to keep at work. What they do, when body and brain are both disabled, is to sail southwards till they get into warm water, and feel the softer breezes blowing on them and the warmth of the sun. A few days in the genial southern waters restores their courage and their nerve, and they return to the fishing banks. Is it not so in the spiritual sphere? Sometimes an individual, or a church, in a cold spiritual temperature, becomes inert and powerless. Let the man or the church sail southwards—in other words, get into the atmosphere of prayer, and feel the warm breath of the Spirit beaming on and “restoring the soul” (Ps. li. 11, 12; Ps. xxiii.).

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ASSURANCE OF ANSWERED PRAYER

I heard the Rev. Dr. Bates, of Boston, U.S.A., say that when he had charge of the Boston Bethel, where Father Taylor preached his wonderful sermons that brought Emerson and the various literary men of Boston to hear him, one night a Vermont mother knocked at his door and said, "The ship is lost; my sailor boy was on board, but he is saved. I have given God thanks, but I have not found him yet." He inquired, "How do you know the ship is lost, and how do you know your boy is saved?" She looked at him as if to read him through and through, to see if he knew anything of the deep things of God, and then she said, "Because God told me so before I left home, when I was praying to Him." He went down to the offices and they said, "Yes, Dr. Bates, the ship is lost and every soul on board; not one is saved." He came back and told her the news. He said she fell on her knees and poured out such a prayer that he had seldom heard, and closed by thanking God that her sailor boy was safe and asking Him to bring him to her. He kept the woman over night, and went down next day to the offices for news, and waited long until they said, "It is no use waiting, Dr. Bates. If there is any news we will let you know at once." That evening as they were sitting down to tea there came a telegram saying, "There is a boy down at Cape Cod saved from the wreck!" Next morning the train brought the boy in, and Dr. Bates said you should have seen that mother—that little woman—as she took the great strapping

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fellow, her sailor boy, in her arms and fairly lifted him off his feet, and heard him tell how, when the storm struck the ship, and the ship went down, he clung to a spar and was drifted to shore, the only one saved of all on board. That mother's prayer held up her boy when the ship was going down in an ocean sepulchre (Ps. lxxviii. 13).—DR. HUGH JOHNSTON.

THE CUP OF SOLOMON

You know the old legend about an enchanted cup filled with poison and put treacherously into the hand of a king. He signed the sign of the cross over it and named the name of the Lord, and it shivered in his grasp. Now take the name of the Lord in that way, reverently and seriously, when you are in doubt about an amusement or about an undertaking. Take the name of the Lord as a test. Name Him over many a cup that other hands will offer to you (Ps. cxvi. 12, 13).—REV. MARSHALL HARTLEY.

RICHES OF THE WORD

There is a beautiful Eastern story of a child walking beside the sea, who saw a bright spangle lying in the sand. She stooped down and picked it up, and found that it was attached to a fine thread of gold. As she drew this out of the sand there were other bright spangles on it. She drew up the gold thread and wound it about her neck and around her head and her arms and her body, until from head to foot she was covered with the bright threads of gold and sparkled

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with the brilliance of the silver spangles. So it is when we lift out of God's Word an ornament of beauty to put into our life, we find that other fragments of loveliness all bound together on the golden chain of love are attached to the one we have taken up (Ps. cxix. 14).

—DR. J. R. MILLER.

"OPEN THOU MINE EYES"

In this great Book of Righteousness, this Old Testament, a good many of us see but little into the gleam here and there; our eyes have not been opened to its breadth and depth and significance. I remember once looking over a magnificent piece of scenery—mountains, rocks and sea—and all of it bathed in the splendours of the setting sun. And I heard a lady close to me complain that she did not think much about it because it was all land and water. Exactly. But, I say, what if Claude had been there? What if Turner had been there? What would they have seen in that panorama of splendour and delight? What did your Master see in the Old Testament? If it is all land and water to you, what was it to your Master? How Christ appealed to these prophets, minstrels, and seers, and how He brought out of this Old Testament all the wondrous things of the Sermon on the Mount! (Ps. cxix. 18).

—DR. W. L. WATKINSON.

THE DANGER AND THE LIGHTHOUSE

The passengers on an Atlantic liner are straining their eyes to catch the first glimpse of the Welsh coast.

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Right in the steamer's path, off the coast of Anglesey, is a group of dangerous rocks called the Skerries, twice each day covered by the tide. Someone calls out, "There are the Skerries!" And presently over the steamer's bows all fix their gaze upon a bright point of light gleaming far away on the darkening horizon. "But where are the Skerries?" "There are the Skerries." Long before you reach them their presence and position are disclosed to you, but only by the lighthouse that has been placed in the dangerous spot to render them harmless. So the Word in which God announces peril to the voyager on the sea of life is a Word which spells refuge. Before He announces the danger He announces the deliverance (Ps. cxix. 105).—REV. C. S. PEDLEY, B.A.

THE MEMORY OF THE JUST

There is a man in my church who said: "The memory of my father is a sacred influence to me; yet I can remember the day when I was hungry because of my father's conduct, and I could not understand it. I can remember my mother crying as she cut the last loaf, keeping none for herself, and gave to us what there was. My father had been turned from his business rather than do a mean and shabby thing. They gave him three days to think of it, and then he came home with no prospects and no money. I remember my mother taking the two eldest of us to one side, and saying, 'It breaks my heart to see you hungry, but I will tell you what kind of man your father is'; and she told us. Many a time since I have been

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tempted to do wrong, and there rose before me the figure of the man who dared even to see his children suffer before he could sully his conscience and sin against God " (Prov. x. 7).—REV. R. J. CAMPBELL, M.A.

A LION IN THE WAY

In Princeton College one of two most intimate friends was afraid to divulge to the other that he had determined to begin a new life and to serve Christ. At length he mustered courage to make the confession, and to his wondering delight he found his friend in the same state of mind. Each one had been a lion in the way to the other. A timid, shrinking wife is often afraid to expose her secret anxieties to an irreligious husband's laugh. A father who would not be afraid to face a cannon on a battlefield finds it no easy bit of bravery to call in his children and offer his first family prayer. When a certain pastor invited every anxious inquirer to retire with him to his study for conversation and prayer, one young man moved stealthily up the aisle until his eye met the eye of a companion, who gave him a look of surprise and contempt; and he slunk back again to hide his confusion and to stifle the conviction of conscience. "What a fool!" you may say. Very true; but, good reader, have you never played the coward at the bray of an ass who wore the skin of a lion? (Prov. xxii. 13).—REV. JOHN ROBERTSON.

RETURNING AFTER MANY DAYS

Bread cast upon the waters may come back after many days. A good man, in the period of his affluence,

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poured out lavishly on friends, kindred, and the poor his bounty, considering himself God's almoner. A sequence of untoward events, for none of which he was responsible, left him poor, and he moved from his home town to a great city, where in an obscure clerkship he died. On the day of the funeral, the widow and daughters had neither loaf nor purse in the house. As they sat together in the gathering dusk, a neighbour tapped at the door. "I knew you would be too tired to prepare a supper," she said, "so I ventured to bring you one." She set down a dainty tray and departed noiselessly. "Girls," said the mother, "we have nothing, but I can trust your father's God." Early the next morning a messenger left a box. It was sent by their father's fellow-clerks and salesmen, and, with a letter of regret and appreciation, contained fifty dollars. "We send it instead of flowers, which we did not send yesterday, thinking they would soon fade." The first mail brought a letter from an old friend, enclosing a cheque for two hundred dollars. "Once," said the writer, "when I was in straits, Ralph helped me." In three days six hundred dollars came to the widow, every dollar a surprise, and every one a testimony to the radiance of the life torch that had lighted others in dark hours (Eccles. xi. 1).—MARGARET E. SANGSTER ("The Little Kingdom of Home").

THE LITTLE FOXES THAT SPOIL THE VINES

You need not break the glasses of a telescope, or coat them over with paint, in order to prevent you from

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seeing through them. Just breathe upon them, and the dew of your breath will shut out all the stars. So it does not require great crimes to hide the light of God's countenance. Little faults can do it just as well. Take a shield and cast a spear upon it, and it will leave in it one great dent. Prick it all over with a million little needle shafts, and they will take the polish from it far more than the piercing of the spear. So it is not so much the great sins which take the freshness from our consciences, as the numberless petty faults which we are all the while committing (Song of Songs, ii. 15).—HENRY WARD BEECHER.

SWORDS INTO PLOUGHSHARES

In all the war in South Africa there was nothing which made so deep an impression upon me as one little incident. Our men were in loose skirmishing order, scattered over a kopje, firing at the enemy on the other hill at a distance from them. And while one of our men was firing from behind a rock, a Boer had somehow or other contrived to creep under the scrub, and to come quite near him. And suddenly the enemy, the Boer, sprang up from a rock twenty paces off, and the two men, practically there alone on the kopje, Boer and Briton, did not shoot each other, because they looked into each other's faces, and they could not forget that they were men. And neither fired; both came forward and shook hands. Humanity was too strong for them (Isa. ii. 4).—DR. R. F. HORTON.

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"A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD"

One day I saw a big blacksmith bend over his little child in a cot, and the child got his tiny hand entangled in the blacksmith's long beard. Presently his wife came in, saying, "Come away to tea." "I cannot," he said, "the child has fast hold of me." It was quite clear the child had not got him by the sense of power; but in a way it had, by its yearning, helpless need. A cripple child will pull God down out of Heaven (Isa. xi. 6).—
REV. F. B. MEYER, B.A.

THE LAME TAKE THE PREY

In human life a man who is lame any way misses the prey, misses the prize; but weakness has a fascination for God, and those who have lost everything that this world can give come off best with our Heavenly Father. I got an illustration of this the other day when I happened to be staying at a farmhouse. With one exception the family consisted of robust, hearty children, but there was one little lame boy. Whilst I was staying there came in a great hamper of apples, and at once all the boys and girls in the family, having eyed them wistfully, proceed to take the apples. The little lame fellow, with his puny, wan face, looked eagerly as the apples disappeared, and no one thought of him till mother came, a bustling, quick-tempered woman. She said, "What is that you are doing? Put all those apples back again, I tell you." And very ruefully they replaced them. "Now," she said, "Jimmy, you come and take your pick." And the little lame fellow on the

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crutch took the ripest and juiciest, and went back with a flush on his pale cheeks. Then mother said to the other children, "Now, do what you like with the rest." I saw how in mother's love the lame take the prey (Isa. xxxiii. 23).—REV. F. B. MEYER, B.A.

THE HIGHWAY IN THE HEART

Some of us in connection with this fellowship have been reading recently anew the story of Gilmour of Mongolia and his wonderful work. In missionary enterprise he seems to me to be a wonderful illustration of the true pilgrim of the Cross at all times. He packed up the things that were necessary, and strapping them on his back started into the lone land alone. No road, no pathway, no announcement of his coming, no pioneer to run before him to discover the way; alone he went to Mongolia, and for long weary years denied himself the common rights of a man in order that he might find the highway of God into that lone and hidden land; and, thank God! he found it. But the highway was in his heart, and this is a perpetual illustration of the pilgrim character (Isa. xl. 3).—DR. CAMPBELL MORGAN.

TREADING THE WINEPRESS ALONE

Have you ever tried to do a piece of work for others all alone? I know some people that have. Most generally it is a woman. She takes up this work, and her husband wishes she would leave it alone. He scoffs at her; it is no use. Her children wish she would leave

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it alone ; they think she is wearing herself out in vain. Her neighbours don't see what she is trying to do down there ; she could not accomplish anything anyway. And still she works away. By-and-by some person gets her vision and comes and lends her a hand, and then another and then another, and then at last there is a group of three or four. How every one that comes lightens something of the load and adds something to the inspiration !

Do you remember the story—I was reading it last week—Whittier, the young poet, writes the first anti-slavery poem, and his sister gets it, I believe, unbeknown to him, and carries it to the newspaper and slips it under the door, and Garrison gets it and reads it and prints it, and forthwith writes his letter back to the unknown poet thanking him for that contribution. The man, that had been all alone fighting the battle against slavery, has now gotten one man to fight with him, and his heart is full of cheer and hope because he has joined hands with him (Isa. lxiii. 3).—DR. LYMAN ABBOTT.

EYES THAT HAVE SEEN THE KING

A story is told by Mr. Sylvester Horne of a college professor who often told in the class-room of thoughts that had come to him in his garden. The thoughts were often so beautiful, and opened up such vistas to the imagination, that the students, none of whom had visited the professor at his home, pictured the garden as a very Eden—spacious, and a glory of trees and flowers. One day two of the students made a pretext

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to visit the professor and get a glimpse, if possible, of the garden. They were received, and taken into the garden, which, to their surprise, they found was the narrowest of strips shut in by high brick walls. "But, professor," they said in their pained disillusion, "surely this is not the garden you are always talking about, in which such fine thoughts come to you?" "Oh, yes, it is," he said with a smile. "But it is so small. We had imagined quite a large garden." "But," replied the professor, pointing to the clear sky studded with stars, "see how *high* it is!" (Isa. vi. 5).

A PARDONING GOD

We have a custom in Massachusetts on Thanksgiving Day which prescribes that our Governor should go to the penitentiary and give a free pardon to any one of the prisoners to whom such exceptional clemency might be shown. You can imagine how anxious each man is to know whether he is the one chosen; it is a pathetic moment when the announcement is made. Well, they tell the story of a man—let us call him Jasper. On a certain Thanksgiving Day the warden read the proclamation, that exceptional clemency was being extended that day to one who had been in the penitentiary twenty years, by name Jasper. The man stood perfectly still. Then the order was given to the men to leave their seats and to march out. They all turned, and Jasper turned with the rest, keeping step as he had done for twenty years. Then the warden called out, "Jasper, the Governor has granted you pardon." "Me! It cannot be me; it must be some

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other Jasper! Me!" The very thought of it broke the poor man down, and he wept and wept. "Me! Me! Me!" It is the hardest thing for any of us to believe that God out of His holiness looks down on us individuals and says, "Yes, Jasper, you are forgiven; justified this very day." That is what we need (Micah vii. 18).—DR. LORIMER.

THE BLESSING OF THE HUMBLE

I think if I were a little bolder the Lord would have some amazing surprises for me. I wish I could be something like Samuel Rutherford was with John Gordon, that wealthy laird who was getting a little wrong in his spiritual life. In one letter he said, "Read over your life with the light of God's daylight on it. Be humble, man; walk softly. Down, down, for God's sake, with your top-sail. Stoop, man, stoop; it is a low entry at Heaven's gate" (Matt. v. 3).—REV. J. H. JOWETT, M.A.

THE GLORY OF THE FLOWER

Ruskin has a beautiful story of a flower. It was told him by a friend, whom he asked to write it down for the benefit of Ruskin's St. George's Guild. I cannot give it to you at full length, but here is the gist of it. It is the story of his first flower. He was a poor boy at the time and in a needy state, when he became the owner of his first flower, "a poor, peaky, little sprouting crocus." He tells of the care with which he tended it, protecting it from the searching March winds,

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covering it with a flower pot till the season got milder. It was ever uppermost in his thoughts, whether sleeping or waking. Until, at length, one sunny, silent Sunday morning it opened its glowing, golden sacramental cup, gleaming like light from heaven dropped in a dark place—living light and fire. So it seemed to his poor vision, and he called the household and the neighbours from their cares to share his rapture. But, alas! his dream was ended: the flower had no fascination for those who came at his call. It was but a yellow crocus to them. Some laughed, some tittered, some jeered him, and old Dick Willis, poor man! who got a crust by selling soft water by the pail, he only rubbed his dim eyes, and exclaimed in pity: “God bless the poor boy!” Little thinking—adds Ruskin—how much he was already blessed (Matt. vi. 28).—REV. J. S. MAVER.

THE WOOER OF POVERTY

There was a young Italian keeping feast with his friends one night, seven hundred years ago, and he wearied of the wine and wearied of the jests. Nothing wrong; a friendly feast. He went out and stood beneath the blue Umbrian sky. By-and-by his friends came out, and they walked home together, and they said to him, “You are in love.” But he was saying nothing, and he had that distant look upon his face of a man who is looking into another world. “You are in love. Who is it?” “I am,” he said, “and my bride is called Poverty. No one has been anxious to woo her since Jesus lived, and I am going to serve her all my days” (Matt. viii. 20).—DR. JOHN WATSON (“IAN MACLAREN”).

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THE SAINTSHIP OF SERVICE

There is a legend in the Greek Church about the two favoured saints, St. Cassianus—the type of monastic asceticism, individual character, which “bids for cloistered cell its neighbour and its work farewell”—and St. Nicholas—the type of generous, active, unselfish laborious Christianity. St. Cassianus enters Heaven and Christ says to him, “What hast thou seen on earth, Cassianus?” “I saw,” he answered, “a peasant floundering with his waggon in the marsh.” “Didst thou help him?” “No!” “Why not?” “I was coming before Thee,” said St. Cassianus, “and I was afraid of soiling my white robes.” Then St. Nicholas enters Heaven, all covered with mud and mire. “Why so stained and soiled, St. Nicholas?” said the Lord. “I saw a peasant floundering in the marsh,” said St. Nicholas, “and I put my shoulder to the wheel and helped him out.” “Blessed art thou,” answered the Lord; “thou didst well; thou didst better than Cassianus.” And He blessed St. Nicholas with fourfold approval (Matt. xii. 11).—DEAN FARRAR.

THE BRIDGE OF BROTHERLINESS

You remember that story of Tolstoy's early days, how the young count went out of doors from the palace on a bitter morning, and passed the beggar at the gate starved and blue and well-nigh dead with the cold and the hunger. And the young count hastily felt in all his pockets, but he had no coin with him. He felt to see if he had any piece of jewellery, but he had

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not even that ; and he stood before the beggar fumbling for the gift that he fain would give. At last, with a burning face, he said to the poor starved man, " I have nothing with me, my brother." And he passed an hour afterwards into the palace, and at the gates he found the beggar, but not starved and blue, but warm and glowing and happy. And the young count said, as he heard the beggar's benediction upon him as he passed, " But I gave you nothing." " Yes," said the beggar ; " but you called me brother." Oh, love and sympathy that day bridged a social chasm that seemed unbridgable (Matt. xxiii. 8).—REV. THOMAS YATES.

THE PREACHER IN THE POTATO PATCH

I have a friend, a minister, who hears the wishes of Jesus Christ. He is in His secrets. He was going one week-day afternoon to preach in a certain village, and was visiting from house to house before the service. He went into one house where he found an old man sitting over a fire in very great trouble. " How is it," my friend said, " that you are so unhappy ? " And the reply was, " Everybody's got their 'taters in but me." He was in trouble because his rheumatism prevented him setting his potatoes. Now it nowhere says in the Minutes of Conference or in Wesley's " Twelve Rules of a Helper " that a minister has to go and dig somebody else's potato patch, but my friend said, " Where is the spade ? " And he took off his ministerial collar, and went into the garden and put the potatoes in, row after row, row after row. I take it that that was a service that the angels watched. He did not wait for

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a commandment; he followed the wishes of God (Matt. xxv. 36).—REV. THOMAS CHAMPNESS.

“YE DID IT UNTO ME”

There is no legend which has so constantly appeared as that—in one form or another—of a sufferer who appeals for help under a disguise, and then when the help has been given or refused, it proves to have been the Lord. In Norway the pied woodpecker is explained as being a woman who on one occasion was asked by the Lord in disguise for a little meat, and in His goodness He multiplied her store; and then she in the churlish thriftiness of a good housewife refused to give Him anything, and in consequence she was transformed into the pied woodpecker, half white and half black, and she was condemned to seek her own food between the bark and the tree, and whenever she should become completely black, that is completely penitent, she should be restored. In the south of Europe this kind of story takes sometimes the most lovely and poetical form. For instance, in the story of Santa Zeta, the patron saint of the town of Lucca in Italy, we are told how the saint, who was a servant-girl, had been clothed by her master in the storm with his jewelled cloak, and she had given the jewelled cloak away to a beggar whom she met in the street :

“ But just as Zeta trembling passed the door,
Her master met her and, with searching eye,
He looked to see if still the cloak she wore.
’Twas gone; at which his anger rose so high
With bitter words he did his rage outpour,
And sharp reproof, while she made no reply.

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But while in loud and angry voice he spoke,
Behold, appeared the beggar with the cloak,
Who, thanking Zeta kindly as he might,
Gave back the cloak like one in haste to go;
His face all changed, and shone with heavenly light,
And lighted hers with its reflective glow.
They tried to speak but he had passed from sight.
No beggar he of those that walk below,
Great comfort had he left their hearts within,
An angel of the Lord had with them been."

(Matt. xxv. 40).—DR. R. F. HORTON.

NOTHING BUT LEAVES

It is probable that all who think of conduct at all think of it too much; it is certain we all think too much of sin. We are not damned for doing wrong but for not doing right. Christ would never hear of negative morality; "thou shalt" was ever His word with which he superseded "thou shalt not." To make our idea of morality centre on forbidden acts is to defile the imagination and to introduce into our judgments of our fellow-men a secret element of gusto (Matt. xxv. 45).—R. L. STEVENSON.

PILATE'S HAND-WASHING

In that weirdly realistic book which Dr. George MacDonald a few years ago introduced to English readers, "Letters from Hell," we read, in plain reference to the narrative before us, these words: "Groans broke upon the silence about me. I started and perceived a strange figure, strangely occupied. It was a man of commanding aspect, handsome even, but in most painful plight.

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He sat by the river washing his hands, which dripped with blood. But for all his washing the dread crimson would not leave his fingers; as soon as he lifted them above the water the red blood trickled down afresh. It was a pitiful sight. He seemed to be aware of my presence, for he turned upon me suddenly, saying, 'What is truth?' I did not reply at once, feeling it to be a question that should not be answered lightly; but, raising his voice, he repeated impatiently, 'What is truth?' 'Well,' I said, 'it is a truth, and a sad one, that it is too late now for us to be seeking the truth.' This answer did not appear to satisfy him" (Matt. xxvii. 24).—REV. T. GASQUOINE, B.A.

LOVE'S "WASTEFULNESS"

Our God has never been accustomed to do things in a beggarly way, in a mean and parsimonious and niggardly and stingy way. He exhibits a magnificence that is princely. One has indeed heard of sceptics who blamed Him for this very matter, and said that He should have been more careful. They asked us to remember all the force that is wasted by the wind currents that sweep across the face of the country. They asked us to remember all the energy that is wasted in the cooling of this earth. What if it had been captured and employed to do some good and useful work instead of being allowed to expend itself before it did any good in the world? Look at the windmills that would have been driven, and look at the furnaces that would have been heated. To what purpose this waste?

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Sir Robert Ball, who is fond of the big fact, enlarges upon the wastefulness of the sun when it sends its light and heat to this earth. It is a strange story. He tells us that the sun is so liberal that it could heat and light two thousand million globes, each one as large as that we presently occupy. There is, that is to say, such an amount of solar radiation given off every hour, every minute, every second. And yet I need hardly add, we are not able to make use of more than the smallest fraction of it. Just suppose a man to be left eight million pounds, and of that eight millions to spend a penny wisely, but all the rest to waste and throw away. You would say that of all extravagant people you had ever heard of, he was the most spendthrift and extravagant. Well, he tells us—does Sir Robert Ball—he tells us that if eight million pounds worth of heat emanated from the sun, we would not be able to secure and make use of on this earth more than the value of a penny. There may be other planets which use it, of course, but when every allowance is made for what they consume, there cannot be a doubt that by far the greater quantity of the heat and light given out by the sun is wasted. It isn't needed in this world, and what becomes of it the most recent science has not been able to tell. It is love's wastefulness, and as in the realm of Nature, so in the realm of grace. God has not spared Himself (Mark xiv. 4).—REV. FRANK Y. LEGGATT, M.A.

“AS A HEN GATHERETH HER CHICKENS”

I have been raising chickens this year, and I have devoted a part of my pear orchard to the chicken coops ;

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and I have been accustomed to go out mornings and evenings to see that the boy took care of the chickens. I think I have now about ten or fifteen broods. The old hen, when watching them, would cluck ; and it was to them a warning of danger, I suppose. They understand it to mean that they are to come in. I could not understand that language ; but these little things that had never been to school understood instantly just what she said. She gave her whole self to them, and their instinct was to run under her, and when there to lift themselves close up to her body and get their warmth from her. I have watched them as they did this again and again. "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not !" What an idea of the intimate and clear relationship between the soul and the Lord Jesus Christ is conveyed in that figure ! (Luke xiii. 34).—H. WARD BEECHER.

"GOD SO LOVED"

If God is the great Giver, it is because He is the great Lover. The story is told by Luther that when his translation of the Bible was being printed in Germany, pieces of the printer's work were allowed to fall carelessly upon the floor of his shop. One day the printer's little daughter coming in picked up a piece of paper on which she found just the words, "God so loved the world that He gave"—the rest of the sentence not having yet been printed. It was a veritable revelation to her, for up to that time she had always been told that the Almighty was to be dreaded, and could only

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be approached through penance. The new light thrown upon God's nature by the scrap that had fallen into her hands seemed to flood her whole being with its radiance, so that her mother asked her the reason of her joyfulness. Putting her hand in her pocket, Luther tells us, the girl handed out the little crumpled piece of paper with the unfinished sentence. Her mother read it, and was perplexed: "He gave—what was it He gave?" For a moment the child was puzzled, but only for a moment; then, with a quick intuition, "I don't know; but if He loved us well enough to give us anything, we need not be afraid of Him" (John iii. 16).—DR. J. WARSCHAUER.

A BURNING AND SHINING LIGHT

A good picture for every pastor's study is the scene at Newburyport with Whitefield, on the last night of his life, "weary in his Master's work, but not of it," standing on the stairs of his humble home, holding a light in his hand and talking to the people till the candle burned to its socket and went out. Then the old hero goes up to his chamber. As the light of the morning breaks, the lamp of his life goes out. There you have your burning and shining light (John v. 35).—DR. C. L. GOODELL.

THE LAMENT OF JESUS

I have searched through literature, I have read many a touching and tender passage, I have read the tear-awakening lament of "In Memoriam," I have been

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stirred to generous passion by the loving lines of Hood over the unfortunate for whose life society seemed responsible, I have listened to the frenzied wail of Hecuba in her abounding grief, I have seen the old Greek hero dazed by the darkness and I have heard his cry for light ; but I have never met with pathos so moving as the cry of Omnipotence and Love, " Ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life ! " (John v. 40).
—DR. W. BOYD CARPENTER.

"I AM THE DOOR"

Dr. George Adam Smith was looking at a sheepfold on a hill in Palestine. And as he was talking to the shepherd, he noticed the hole in the wall around the fold through which the sheep went. He looked about for the piece of wood that would be used for the door. Seeing none, he turned to the shepherd and said, " Where is the door." " Oh," replied the shepherd, " I am the door " (John vii. 9).—H. JEFFS.

FLORIST'S CATALOGUE AND FLOWER GARDEN

There is the same difference between theology, as theology, and the facts of vital religion as there is between the florist's catalogue and the flower garden. When Christ said, " Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," He did not mean by " the truth " either Calvinism or Arminianism, Old Theology or New Theology, but " the truth as it is in Jesus," the freedom of the abounding life of those who are branches

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of the vine. Read the list of the roses in the florist's catalogue — "Gloire de Dijon," "Maréchal Niel," "Crimson Rambler," "General Jacquemines," and so on. The names convey no idea to those who do not know the roses, though they may conjure up pleasant recollections to the man who is an amateur rose-grower. The names in the catalogue are names, and the names may be attached to the rose-trees as labels, but there is no colour and no perfume in the name and the label. But go to a garden in the country in June, what the Germans call the *Rosenmonat*, the Month of Roses, and the garden is a glory of crimson, pink, white and yellow roses, and the air is aromatic with their fragrance. "The truth that makes us free" is the life that buds and blooms into beauty and fragrance. Let us never imagine that any theology, however Old or however New, can take the place of the life. It may endeavour to define the life, but it is the life itself we must have (John viii. 32).—H. JEFFS.

LIVING, BUT DEAD

The Bible says, "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." Just look at a woman or a girl who liveth in pleasure. Why, is not she the very picture of life? Her body is so glowing with life that her beauty attracts all who see her; her mental life may also be so rich that, wherever she moves in the circles where she seeks her pleasures, she is accompanied by a crowd who admire her wit and cleverness; and her emotional life may be in so healthy a condition that she has a heart rich in love to give to the happy man who is able to win

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it. She seems to be the very picture of life. Yes! but follow her into another section of existence, where a different set of powers come into operation, and there you will find that she prays not, she thinks not of God, she neither loves nor serves Christ, and she is not laying up treasure in Heaven, and she is not prepared to die; in short, her spirit, the finest thing in man, the true glory of womanhood, is dead; and so the Scripture says, "She is dead while she liveth" (John x. 10).—
DR. J. STALKER.

"WE WOULD SEE JESUS"

In one of his books, Archdeacon Wilson, lately master of Clifton College, tells a significant story. Some of the best and ablest of the students at a women's college opened a class for teaching the poorest of the men in a neglected suburb. They were fired by the noblest impulse—to give themselves to work for their unfortunate brothers. They read to them, they taught them reading and writing, they sang to them, and the men gathered to them in increasing numbers. After some months they asked the men whether there was anything in particular that they wanted to hear more about. There was silence; and then a low whisper was heard from among them. One of the women went up to the speaker. "What was it you wished specially to hear about?" "Could you tell us," he replied, "something about the Lord Jesus Christ?" (John xii. 21).—REV. D. M. ROSS, M.A.

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THE SHOCK OF NEW TRUTH

On the great moors where I would wander in the summer-time, fifty or sixty years ago, there was one plant whose roots sent down no feelers after the eager springs that make the heather bloom. It was of rare worth and beauty once, the shepherds used to say, but the Fiend bit off the root so that it should never come to the better and the best. So we may bite off the root of the fair flower of promise between the door and the jamb of the heart when we shut it in the face of the messengers. A new truth will always shock us at the first impact, and the men and women who bring a new message are the angels of God in human guise (John xii. 29).—DR. ROBERT COLLYER.

THE VANQUISHER OF DEATH

One of the most beautiful of the Greek plays, the "Alcestis" of Euripides, tells how Herakles, the Samson of Greek story, on one of his journeys called at the palace of his friend King Admetus, who had once done him a great service. He found the king and everybody in the palace wild with grief because the young and lovely Queen Alcestis had been taken away by Death, who was regarded as a mighty monster, so strong and fierce that no man had ever been able to overcome him. Herakles, however, who had fought and slain many monsters, said he was not afraid of Death, and he would go to the tomb and grapple with Death, and he would rescue the queen from his clutches. He goes to the tomb and grapples success-

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fully with the monster, whom he compels to give up his prey. The most beautiful scene in the play is where Herakles stands with the silent woman completely covered by a white veil in the presence of the heart-broken king. He lifts the veil and there stands Alcestis smiling with the bloom of health upon her cheeks. That is a fable; but it is no fable that One stronger than Herakles has grappled with and overthrown Death. "I am the Resurrection and the Life," said Jesus. "He that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" cried Paul (John xi. 25; 1 Cor. xv. 55).

THE MASTER CALLETH

Is there anything that appeals to the general heart of man like some manifestation of the spirit of Christ? Sister Dora, after her long day's work in her Walsall hospital for waifs and strays, for poor souls beaten down in the battle of life, often went to rest too tired to sleep. But over her head was a bell, to be sounded in spite of all her weariness, when any sufferer needed her. And the bell bore this inscription: "The Master is come and calleth for thee." Is there any heart insensible to the appeal of such toil and sacrifice? (John xi. 28).—REV. BERNARD J. SNELL, M.A.

THE DIVINE MOTHER-HEART

Out in Tennessee, when it was a very rough country—it is now one of the most noble commonwealths of

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the Union—there was an Indian band come in upon a settlement, and after murdering nearly everybody, this band snatched up the little children and made away into the forest. There were two or three mothers left, and these mothers always kept in their minds the pictures of the little children. Many a child had been lost in that way, and lost at such an early age that it was impossible in after years to get the child out of the wild habit it had acquired. Years went by, and there came one with his band of warriors and routed this band of Indians, and, taking all of them prisoners, they brought back with them middle-aged men, men that had faces almost as white as the faces of the old women who looked for their sons among them. One woman who had lost her boy, who had been taken almost from her breast, looked along the line and found him not. By-and-by an old man said to her, "Is not there some melody you could sing as you go up and down that way?" Then she thought of a crooning melody which sobbed its way out from the dear old soul. She pushed her grey hairs back, and the tears were running down her cheeks as her voice trembled on, and all at once a great stalwart man, that the forest had not entirely put back into a barbaric condition, broke from the rest and with a great cry stood in the presence of his mother. The dear old soul was soon in his arms. She was singing still, and the great savage man wept on her shoulder and cried for joy. So far has Jesus Christ come—as a hen gathereth her brood—carrying Fatherhood so far that it touches your heart and mine, and when we see Him doing a noble thing,

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some Divine thing, all the latent forces of the soul that belong to God rise, and we begin to sing too (John xiv. 9).
—DR. F. W. GUNSAULUS.

CHRIST'S LEGACY OF PEACE

There is only one power that can draw after it all the multitudinous heaped waters of the ocean, and that is the quiet silver moon in the heavens, which pulls the tidal wave into which merge all currents and swell breakers, as it rolls around the earth. And so, Christ, shining down, lambent and gentle, but changeless, will draw in one great surge of harmonised motion all the else contradictory currents of our stormy souls. "My peace I give unto you" (John xiv. 27).—DR. MACLAREN.

THE VINE AND THE FRUIT

I asked a man the other day which was the most important end of a bough, the end where the fruit hung or the other? Looking extremely wise, he said, "Of course the end where the fruit came." Do you think so? Ay, but surely the important end of the bough is not where the fruit hangs, but where it touches the trunk, because if that connection is unhindered then through it the sap will pour, and you may leave the bunches of fruit to take care of themselves if its boughs only are united and kept united to the trunk (John xv. 5).
—REV. F. B. MEYER, B.A.

"JUST JESUS AND ME"

I read somewhere that a traveller came on a clearing in the backwoods of one of the Southern States, where

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a little hut stood, and a poor old woman, bent double with age, was gathering sticks for a fire. "Do you live here all alone, auntie?" he said. "Yes, massa," she replied; "just Jesus and me." There are some souls to whom Christ is so real that they need none else (John xv. 14, 15).—REV. F. B. MEYER, B.A.

THE HEAVENLY VISION

There is a story told by a soldier of the Civil War in America, that, in a critical pause in one of the great battles, a regiment to which he belonged was lying down in a wood, in imminent peril of collapse, when suddenly, in the tense silence, a bird sent forth a joyous trill of song. Instantly the soldiers in their agony of suspense thought of homes and little ones, and all that depended on their remaining firm and immovable under attack, and instantly they regained their confidence, and when the rebel attack was renewed they invincibly sent it rolling back on the foe. So, in the battle of life, we need a glimpse of Divine incentives, of human love, of the ideal purity of holiness, to quicken our swooning hearts, lest we utterly fail in the hot and teeming strife (Acts xxvi. 19).—PRINCIPAL E. GRIFFITH-JONES.

SAINTSHIP IN COMMON LIFE

One bright Saturday afternoon, when the river Mersey was full of traffic and the ferry boats were crowded with pleasure-seekers, almost opposite my study windows a tug was hauling a great liner to her

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berth, when the rope fouled, the liner quietly pushed the tug over, and she disappeared like a pebble beneath the waves. It was one of the incredible, unforgettable sights of a lifetime—the way in which men from surrounding craft were in the boats or in the river in the twinkling of an eye. Never did squirrel climb a tree as rapidly as these men leaped at the chance—to live or die: what mattered it when life was to be lovingly saved or life to be loyally sacrificed? Hearts of gold, how well we know these men—and yet we know them not (Rom. i. 7).—REV. C. F. AKED, D.D.

THE DYNAMIC OF SCRIPTURE

How often even a single phrase of Scripture has revolutionised a life! It would seem that Scripture possesses the vitalising power of that elixir we read of in the mediæval romances of chivalry, a single drop of which sufficed to draw from the very jaws of death a knight whose life was escaping through a gaping wound, or whose strength was all bespent with hardships and hunger. “The just shall live by faith,”—that phrase flashed on the soul of Luther, and Luther sounded his trumpet against the Vatican, and the miracle of the ramshorns at Jericho was repeated. “Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth,”—that phrase, uttered by a Primitive Methodist local preacher in a village chapel, brought the fulness of Gospel light to Charles Haddon Spurgeon, and who but God knows what blessing came to the world through Spurgeon! (Rom. i. 17; Isa. xlv. 22).—H. JEFFS.

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MORE THAN CONQUERORS

The Indians say that when a man kills a foe the strength of the slain enemy passes into the victor's arm. In the weird fancy lies a truth. Each defeat leaves us weaker for the next battle, but each conquest makes us stronger. Nothing makes a prison to a human life but a defeated, broken spirit. The bird in its cage that sings all the while is not a captive. God puts His children in no position in which He does not mean them to live sweetly and victoriously. So in any circumstances we may be "more than conquerors through Him that loved us" (Rom. viii. 37).—J. R. MILLER.

WHO SHALL SEPARATE?

On one occasion I went to see an Etruscan tomb in the neighbourhood of Rome. It consisted of two chambers. In the outer one the bodies of the dead were laid; in the inner, the articles which the dead had used and prized most in life were stored up. I noticed below the roof of the inner chamber small holes in the wall. These were the places in which the nails had been put in order to hang upon them some of the most precious and fragile things that belonged to the dead when living. The nails had long ago fallen out and rusted away into dust; and when the tomb was opened the visitor who first entered it found the floor strewn with fragments of the beautiful Etruscan vases that had tumbled to the ground. All earthly hopes and helps are like nails in the walls of a tomb. In the course of

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time they all rust and fall out ; the air of change and death breathes upon them and they perish, and the precious things of life that were suspended upon them are broken and destroyed. The earth is strewn with the wrecks of things that have fallen from insecure earthly supports.

But we need not fear for the stability of the nail upon which our salvation depends. All God's nails hold. Having loved His own which were in the world, He loves them to the end ; and neither death nor life, nor things present, nor things to come, can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, or from the love of one another in Him (Rom. viii. 35).—DR. HUGH MACMILLAN.

OVERCOME EVIL WITH GOOD

Mr. Kay Robinson, the naturalist, describes a competition witnessed by him in the fields. Owing to a peculiarity of weather the poppies had managed to get a start of an inch or so in the matter of height over the wheat and barley, and the obnoxious flowers were just beginning to burst into bloom that would have converted the stunted grain into lakes of scarlet, when down came the rain ; in a single day and night the wheat shot up above the poppies, and for the rest of the season the poisonous things were overwhelmed in a wavy sea of prosperous green and yellow gold. A similar competition is going on between our good and bad qualities ; it is a rivalry between the wheat and the tares as to which shall get on top and smother the other. What is the true course to adopt whilst this

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struggle proceeds? Let us concentrate ourselves on the corn. We overcome the evil in the good (Rom. xii. 21.)—DR. W. L. WATKINSON.

GOD'S USE OF WORTHLESS THINGS

You have heard the story of the artist who was building a coloured window. As he went on with his work he kept breaking bits of glass and throwing them aside. His apprentice, who was with him, thought he could make use of these broken bits. He asked his master's permission, and having got to work, he made with the broken bits a more beautiful window than his master did with the choice pieces. And just like that God can make use of the refuse and broken bits of life. There is nothing too poor for God to use ; there is nothing too weak and worthless for Him to employ (1 Cor. i. 27, 28). —REV. J. D. JONES, M.A., B.D.

EARTHLY PICTURES OF ETERNAL REALITIES

When we look at the photograph of a friend, our minds, while quite alive to the merits or defects of the artist's work, do not rest upon what is presented to our eyes. We look through it, beyond it, to the person it represents. To anyone who is a stranger to our friend, the picture is simply a photograph and no more ; but to our gaze it brings before us familiar features on which we look no more, it recalls happy fellowships in days bygone. We gaze upon it, yet as we do so we are scarcely thinking of it at all. Memory and heart are

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busy with the incidents it recalls, and our minds are carried away to the dear old days when that face was the sunshine of the home. Similarly when a painter places a landscape before us, what would he think if we only saw certain effects of colour? He would have failed of his purpose if his canvas did not set imagination astir, to wander over these sunlit slopes, or to sit by the banks of that limpid stream, or to follow the progress of yonder shepherd with his flock. And earthly things are a Divine picture in like manner of things heavenly (1 Cor. vii. 31).—DR. W. ROSS TAYLOR, D.D.

THE LUNACY OF DISUNION

A visitor to one of our county asylums was being conducted over the premises by the governor. On going the rounds he was forcibly struck with the strong physique of many of the men and with the comparatively small number of officials who were employed to maintain order and discipline. "What would happen," he asked the governor, "if a revolt were to break out in the asylum and all these strong able-bodied men were to combine against the authority of the small number of officials?" "My dear sir," replied the governor, "lunatics never combine" (1 Cor. xii. 14—20).—WILLIAM WARD.

FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE

Faith, hope and love may be likened to three threads of silk: purple and silver and gold. Look at these

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and tell me if you can into how many forms of fabric they may be woven by the cunning hand of the artificer from the spools on which they have been wound. Do you suppose that you can interpret, from looking at them, what infinite combinations can be wrought out of them? The artist brings his palette, and here are the red, the yellow and the brown, the whole range of colours. Now look at this palette, and you may say, "There is the brown, there is the yellow, and there is the red," but does that give you any conception of the painting which may be produced from them by a Titian, a Rubens or a Turner? What infinite forms and tints can come out of that little scale of colours! So no man can tell what vast disclosures and combinations and developments shall come out of these graces of faith and hope and love (1 Cor. xiii. 13).—H. WARD BEECHER.

VALIANT-FOR-TRUTH CROSSES THE RIVER

After this, it was noised about that Mr. Valiant-for-Truth was taken with a Summons by the same Post as the other, and had this for a Token that the Summons was true—that his pitcher was broken at the fountain. When he understood it, he called for his Friends and told them of it. Then said he, "I am going to my Father's; and tho' with great Difficulty I am got hither, yet now I do not repent me of all the Trouble I have been at to arrive where I am. My Sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my Pilgrimage, and my Courage and Skill to him that can get it. My Marks and Scars

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I carry with me, to be a witness for me that I have fought His Battles who now will be my rewarder."

When the day that he must go hence was come, many accompanied him to the River Side, into which as he went he said, Death, where is thy sting? And as he went down deeper he said, Grave, where is thy victory? So he passed over and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side (1 Cor. xv. 55).—
JOHN BUNYAN.

COULD NOT SAY NO TO GOD

It so happened that I heard the last address which was given by a man whose name is very dear and precious to many of you, Dr. A. J. Gordon, of the Clarendon Street Church, of Boston. This was the dying message of Dr. Gordon to the young men of Boston, which I believe he would have me pass on to you, the young men of London: "Never say No to God!" He said that, when William Carey died, one of his fellow ministers preached a funeral sermon concerning him, in which he made the very singular statement that William Carey, though a good man, had one serious defect of character: he was an inconstant man, and did not know his own mind. "To think," said Dr. Gordon, with fine irony, "to think of saying this of William Carey of all men, that he was an inconstant man, and did not know his mind!" But this was the way in which this brother minister came to that conclusion. Said he: "Mr. Carey himself acknowledged this defect. He said, 'I left the shoemaker's bench because I could not say No; I went to Kettering

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because I could not say No ; I was ordained for missionary work in India because I could not say No ; and I engaged in the translation of the Bible because I could not say No ; and all my life long I have been doing things because I could not say No ' ' ' (2 Cor. v. 14).—
DR. F. E. CLARK.

THE NEW CREATION

I have seen a stream sink down into the tiniest volume, and I have seen it trailing through the mud in disgrace ; and then, far away on the mountain range, clouds gathered and burst, and it was not many hours before the stream came down with the first wave six feet high, and the banks were full of sweet, clean, rejoicing water before the evening. So did Christ come in to this poor human race, and behold the veins have swollen again, not with unclean blood. We can stand and say to the tempted man, Christ died on the cross to conquer sin, and He sits on God's right hand to administer the effects of His victory. And we can tell the chief of sinners through Christ he can be made a new creation (2 Cor. v. 17).—DR. JOHN WATSON.

GRACE ON THE SURFACE

Grace does not go very deep with most of us. We are not thawed out more than an inch or two, and down below that is the ice as it is in Alaska, where the sun never thaws out the ice very far down, but only to a little depth on the surface. We think ourselves to be Christians because we have a little excitable sympathy, and because we do some good things ; but who

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of us carries steadfastly considerate thoughtfulness, gentleness, meekness, and helpfulness towards others? (Gal. v. 22, 23).—H. WARD BEECHER.

“EXCEEDING ABUNDANTLY”

“You are coming to a king,
Large petitions with you bring.”

But the large petitions must be winged with large expectations or they will rise no higher than the roof. Dr. C. A. Berry told how, during a hard winter at Wolverhampton, soup kitchens were opened for the relief of distress. The people brought their cans for the soup. One boy always took a can that held about a couple of gallons. The quart of soup poured into it always looked such a little in the can that for very shame the dispensers of the soup poured into it another couple of quarts to make the can look as if there was something in it. When we make our petitions to God, let us take large cans (Eph. iii. 20).—H. JEFFS.

THE MINERS' CLEAN EYES

While in the mountains of Colorado I noticed the miners going into the mine at the beginning of their “shifts.” Their hands and faces were clean as they could make them; but at the end of the “shifts” it would be difficult to tell whether they were by nature black or white, and yet there was one part of the face which was just as clean as when they entered the mine; that was the ball of the eye; and that not because no impurities had touched it, for the mine was filled with

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such, but because there is a little tear-gland, which keeps working all the time, and when the least speck touches the eye it washes it away. We are in the midst of sin and uncleanness in this world, but we may be kept clean every whit if we be only "filled with the Spirit" (Eph. v. 18).—DR. CHAPMAN.

HOW TAULER BECAME A PREACHER

Tauler, who was almost contemporary with Luther, was one of the greatest orators of his time, a man deeply and wondrously eloquent, and whenever he mounted his pulpit at Strasburg Cathedral it was crowded with all sorts and conditions of men, from the mayor downwards. And across the hills of Switzerland there came Nicholas, the Switzer. He sat amid the crowd, and found his way to Tauler. He said "I want to confess to you." "Certainly," said Tauler. But after the first confession Tauler found that it was he who needed to confess, rather than Nicholas. He told Nicholas that his life was a failure, that beneath the outward splendour of it there was a hungry heart. He had not found the pivot, the centre of rest, and he said, "What must I do?" "You must die, Master Tauler." "Die?" said he. "Ah, ah, you will never get the true source of power till you have died to your own." And for a year the pulpit missed the great preacher, and in his soul he was empty of all faith in his eloquence and learning, and became but a little child. And again he went back to his pulpit, and the place was crowded again, and five minutes after he started preaching he broke down, and buried his face in absolute confusion; and the people

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as they passed out disappointed said, "Our great preacher is spoiled." And then he began simply, and talked to the poor people that gathered round him once or twice in the church, and the fame of it spread, and those sermons were preached which Miss Winkworth has translated for us, and which Charles Kingsley wrote the introduction to—sermons which the heart of man will never allow to die until sin and sorrow have fled away for ever. Don't you see how sometimes it is necessary for a man to empty himself, even as Christ did, of his reliance upon his native power, that being as a little child he may get power back from God after another sort? (Phil. ii. 8, 9).—REV. F. B. MEYER, B.A.

EXALTATION THROUGH ABNEGATION

Supposing a woman, when she is dying, calls her eldest daughter to her side and says, "You will stop with the children till they are wed, and you will see to your father?" She says, "Yes, mother; I will." She does not know what she is promising. Shortly after, love looks in at the window of her life and says, "Will you follow me, will you wed me?" And she loves, and her heart leaps out to the love of her life. "Will you come now?" "I can't." "Make haste!" "I can't; I must stay here." "Then I can't wait." And the love fades away and her heart dies. And she pursues her path, a lonely woman. And the boys marry, and the girls go into homes of their own, and the father dies, blessing her for her care. And in late middle life, she looks around upon other girls whom she has known in their happy homes; and often her heart sinks—"Never

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for me!" but as she goes to and fro amongst these children, and the babes are called by her name, and the little boy and the young fellows grow up almost to worship the ground on which she treads, she is the queen of the whole family. Don't you see that by her absolute self-abnegation for others she has become lifted to the throne, and every knee bows to her, and every tongue in the family confesses that she is sweet and true? (Phil. ii. 8, 9).—REV. F. B. MEYER, B.A.

"WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION"

A clipper ship crossing the banks of Newfoundland in heavy weather strikes an iceberg. She settles rapidly at the bows, and her captain and crew have barely time to leap into the lifeboat. The question "What must we do to be saved?" is answered by their prompt leap into the lifeboat (committal of the soul in trust to Christ), which is an act of faith. But after the ship has sunk the crew are still out in the deep and dangerous sea. There is a second process necessary. In order to keep out of the trough of the sea and to reach the distant shore, they must stick to the boat and pull lustily at the oars. They must "work out their own salvation" now by hard rowing. But this is a continued process of salvation day after day, until they reach the shores of Nova Scotia (Phil. ii. 12).—DR. CUYLER.

DAYS OF TRANSFIGURATION

You pace the seashore over the pale yellow innumerable sands, and here and there you see a sparkle as if

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some sand grain were a ruby or an emerald; you go to it and take it up—it is no iridescent opal, it is no spark of fire, it is only one of those pale yellow innumerable grains of sand; but for one instant the sunbeam has smitten it, and it has been transfigured in its insignificance into living splendour. It is even so sometimes with human lives. There comes a day sometimes to the humble, if they deserve it, when, as to the humble shepherds on Bethlehem's plain, the angel of the Lord stands over them, and the glory of the Lord shines round about them; they leap into instantaneous heroism, they are transfigured into children of immortality; they need no sceptre and no purple then to invest them with the grandeur and the pathos of truth. It is an unknown Eastern monk who springs into the arena and thrusts himself between the gladiators; he is martyred; the gladiatorial games cease for ever, and Telemachus has bought his eternity with a little hour. It is a poor Russian slave; on the track of his master and children the wolves are howling in the snow; he springs out among the yelling pack and is torn to pieces; but his master and children are saved, and his deed thrills through the world. It is a very humble, ungifted Belgian priest who goes to die, a leper, among the hopeless lepers of the Pacific isle, and the world cares more for him than it cares for emperors. It is a pilot on Lake Erie in the burning ship who clings to the tiller, and safely steers to the jetty, though he drops a blackened corpse; he knows that Christ will not turn His back on a man who died for men. It is a poor little maid-of-all-work; the house is in flames, the rooms are

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filled with blinding smoke, but at all costs she will save the last of her master's children; she does save the child, and is killed, and the poor East-end "slavey" has laid on the haughty palace gate of humanity a service and an example worth cartloads of diamonds, and the lives of thousands of selfish or arrogant grandees (Phil. ii. 17).—DEAN FARRAR.

FLOWERS OR WEEDS?

I remember how, when the Great Central Railway made their trunk line through the Rugby district, they had to carve their way through a solid fold in the country. It was said to be the biggest cutting on the line. I watched carefully the banks of that cutting and the earth heaps that were thrown up. At first, they were as bare as could be, but presently here and there the seed of a thistle or a dandelion or a knotweed would find a lodgment, and, before many months elapsed, the whole space was overspread with flowers and grasses and herbs. There was no emptiness. Before one could well believe it, the bare banks were covered with young seedlings that had drifted against it by chance on the wings of the breeze. The human mind is like that cutting. It cannot remain unpossessed. It is always receiving, never empty (Phil. iv. 8).—J. LEWIS PATON, M.A.

"THROUGH CHRIST WHICH STRENGTHENETH ME"

I crossed the ocean lately on a powerful steamship, which weighed over twenty thousand tons, and pushed

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her way against winds and waves at the rate of twenty knots an hour. I could not see the propelling force : that was hidden deep down in the glowing furnaces, heaped constantly with fresh coal. As long as the coal lasted the steamer could hold on her victorious way. That illustrates the spiritual life of every strong, healthy Christian. His strength is measured by his inward supply of Divine grace (Phil. iv. 13).—DR. CUYLER.

THE FRUITFUL LIFE

We are told of a man who served and blessed humanity by drifting down a great river in a virgin country in a boat filled with apple-seeds. His plan was to go in advance of the settlers, planting orchards in the wilderness. When he had found an open glade in the forest, he dug up the soil, planted several thousand apple-seeds, wove a brush fence to keep the deer away, then drifted down the river to repeat his work in another open glade. When the early settlers came to these open glades they found the fruit trees that to them seemed to have been let down from God out of Heaven.

If we cannot plant a tree we can plant a flower. Everything beautiful is like a blessing let down by God from Heaven. The more beautiful and fruitful we can make the earth the more we shall see of God. He steps down from the stars and meets us among the flowers (Col. i. 10).—DR. J. M. FARRAR, Brooklyn, U.S.A.

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HID WITH CHRIST IN GOD

“Our life is hid with Christ in God.” It is the passionate and unceasing insistence on the Christ-nature within every man as such which gave dignity and power to the preaching of the early Quakers. Read George Fox’s journal, and this emerges out of an astonishing amount of fanaticism and unfairness. It runs like a thread of gold through the whole narrative. On all hands religious men were disputing about the limits of Church membership, the rights of hierarchies, the importance of sacraments, the decrees of God in election and reprobation, and so forth ; and there was immense excitement and vehemence and partisanship ; Christianity seemed to have lost its moral force altogether ; and the Image of Christ had faded from view. Then came this strange, youthful-looking man, with his long hair and brilliant eyes, and courage of a martyr blended with an extraordinary tenderness, and a fervent eloquence which held men spell-bound and called them away from the quarrelling Christians and their churches, and pointed them to Christ within themselves. This is his habitual phrase. “I directed them to the light of Christ *in* them.” “I exhorted the family to turn to the Lord Jesus Christ and hearken to His teachings in their own hearts.” “I directed them to Christ, the true Teacher within” (Col. iii. 3).—CANON HENSLEY HENSON.

GOOD SOLDIERS OF CHRIST

At the battle of Missionary Ridge a regiment made a desperate attack upon the enemy. “Who ordered that

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charge?" cried the commanding general of an officer who galloped up to him. "No one, sir," was the response; "the men saw the need and the opportunity, and they dashed forward without waiting for orders." The world wants thousands of Christian warriors thus to see "the need and the opportunity," and to act promptly! Many of us are slow of heart and blind (2 Tim. ii. 3).—REV. ALLAN SUTHERLAND.

MINISTERING ANGELS

I went once to see a dying girl whom the world had roughly treated. She never had a father, she never knew her mother. Her home had been the poorhouse, her couch the hospital cot, and yet, as she staggered in her weakness there, she picked up a little of the alphabet, enough to spell out the New Testament, and she had touched the hem of the Master's garment and had learned the new song. And I never trembled in the presence of majesty as I did in the majesty of her presence as she came near the crossing. "Oh, sir," she said, "God sends His angels. I read in His Word: 'Are they not ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be the heirs of salvation?' And when I am lying in my cot they stand about me on this floor, and when the heavy darkness comes and this poor side aches so severely He comes, and He says, 'Lo, I am with you,' and I sleep, I rest" (Heb. i. 14).—BISHOP C. H. FOWLER.

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SAVED BY ANOTHER'S SUFFERING

The mother who has tried talking, and talking has not done any good, who has tried serene living, and serene living has not done much, until at last the evil of her son enters like the iron into her soul, and she, alone in her closet, agonises and weeps and prays, and thinks she is not doing anything, now first is beginning to do something. For, though her boy never sees the tear glistening on her cheek, and never hears the prayer that goes up from her agonised heart, he knows the difference, and he begins to feel only when she has begun to suffer with him, and for him, and in him (Heb. ii. 9—13).—DR. LYMAN ABBOTT.

THE LORD'S CHASTENINGS

When I was in Kimberley I was taken to the great diamond mine there, and saw first the blasting of the rocks; then that they took those rocks and laid them out under the sky to be desiccated. And after six months these rocks, full of diamonds, were placed in mighty crushing machines, driven by an engine of 1,000 horse-power. This grinding process was intended to rub down the rocks till they became dust. Out of the dust diamonds were caught on the grease of the pulsating machine, whereas the garnets passed on and were lost. God grinds us to the very dust, because it is only out of the dust He gets His diamonds. Out of the dust He can mould and fashion us (Heb. xii. 6).—REV. F. B. MEYER, B.A.

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WORKS WITH FAITH

I can imagine a listless, indolent person sitting within reach of a tumbler of water, and saying to the servant, "Hand me that tumbler of water"; and I can imagine someone giving the answer, "It is within your reach, take it if you want it. If it is not worth taking, it is not worth having." There are many people who pray to God for things that are within their reach. All that is necessary is that they should find out how to procure them. There are some people who want their prayers answered at a jump, just as when we go to a post-office for our letters they are handed right out to us; or just as when we go to the bank with a cheque we receive the cash instantly. Oftentimes, however, God answers more through discipline (James ii. 14).—H. WARD BEECHER.

THE UNRULY MEMBER

There are some lines, crude and homely enough, but sensible enough, written by Mr. Will Carleton, the American, which I am very fond of recalling:—

"Boys flying kites haul in their white-winged birds;
You can't do that way when you are flying words.
'Careful with ' is good advice, I know;
'Careful with words' is ten times doubly so.
Thoughts unexpressed may sometimes fall back dead;
But God Himself can't kill them when they're said."

Oh! young men and women, learn to hold the tongue. You may do injustice by a thoughtless word to someone that you will be sorry for all your days (James iii. 5, 6).—REV. C. SILVESTER HORNE, M.A.

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GROWTH IN GRACE

People think that if they are going to have the graces of the Spirit they must pray and pray for them, and that somehow God will put them on them; as if a daughter should say to her mother, "Oh, mother! that scarlet shawl," and the mother should come to her some day and say, "My daughter, for a good while you have been asking me for a scarlet shawl, and here it is." Persons go on praying to God for various Christian states of mind, and they have an idea that some day He will touch them and they will have them; whereas all high religious states are the result of education, just as a knowledge of music, or painting, or history, or philosophy, or science is (2 Peter iii. 18).—H. WARD BEECHER.

THE GRACE OF OUR LORD

What is "grace"? It is several things. First, the kindness of an exalted person to those below him. We sing "God save our gracious King." Then grace is a gift, a favour, a pardon, granted as an act of pure benevolence. The King, as an "act of grace," allows gentlefolk in poor circumstances to occupy rooms in some of the royal palaces. As an "act of grace," too, he may remit or cancel a sentence passed by a judge. Then "grace" means beauty, elegance: as a "graceful" person. Queen Alexandra is both "gracious" and "graceful." All these meanings, and much more, are implied in "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ." Let

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us think for a moment, however, of His grace as His beauty. We are reminded of Psalm xxvii., and the Psalmist's desire "to behold the beauty of the Lord," and of the invocation of Psalm xc.: "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." The "grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" does come upon those who are His in a very real sense. Old couples who have lived long together in perfect affection are said to grow like each other. Old saints who have long lived in communion and love with Christ grow like Him. There is an unearthly beauty in the faces of these people in moments of rapt devotion. Some day they will be fully "like Him, for they will see Him as He is" (1 Cor. xvi. 23; 1 John iii. 2).

THE LOVELESS LIFE AND THE LIFE IN GOD

It is told of the Greeley expedition to the Arctic regions, in search of the North Pole, that the weary months of waiting for their rescuers told on the men in a fearful manner. Some died from starvation; others were almost crazed by the hunger experienced and the intense cold; others were driven to the realm of deceit and cruelty; and Greeley himself was in a struggle to keep up his courage and fortitude. At last the rescuers arrived; but the group of men were so dazed by their cold, desolate surroundings that they scarcely realised what it meant. They were led away from the Arctic night to the land of sunshine and plenty, where no cold could freeze their bodies nor lack of food bring them

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starvation. Day and night would come and go and the world look new, bright and joyful.

Man, without the ideal of right living which Christ gives, is in the grip of moral starvation and in the realm of spiritual cold. He needs to be rescued and led away from this condition to the region of life and joy. He needs the sunshine of God's love and tenderness to warm his heart and beautify his soul (1 John iv. 7, 8).
—DR. WAYLAND HOYT.

THE HEART'S CRY OF LOVE

How common, how persuasive, is this love-life, even in its first realm, the love of kindred! I was once summoned to the poor little home of a labouring man. The doctor had just left with his fatal verdict: "Nothing more can be done." On an impoverished cot in the cleanly kitchen, the only room with light and air, lay a beautiful boy of eighteen months. The young father was pacing the room in a man's mute agony. The mother kneeled by the poor little cot and smoothed the coverlet with her work-roughened hands, and touched gently the fair face already sharpening to the stillness of death. Her breaking heart burst out in a terrible cry: "Oh, my love, my little one, how can I live without you!"

Not long after I was called to a palatial home. I entered a sumptuous apartment. Trained nurses sat with folded hands in an adjoining room, their work over. A council of eminent physicians had just left

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the house. The fatal word had been spoken : " Nothing can be done ; it is a question of only an hour, possibly less." There again was the father pacing in a man's mute agony. There again the mother kneeled by the dainty couch, touching aimlessly with her delicate shapely hands the coverlet, or lifting the masses of bright hair tossed upon the pillow. There again lay the beautiful child, the flower-like face touched with that appealing pathos, which is only seen upon the face of a dying child. Again the heart-breaking cry, " Oh, my beauty, my blessing, my life ! Why cannot I die for you ? "

Explorers opened an Egyptian tomb, a tomb shut hard and fast by the iron silence of three thousand years. There stood the exquisitely carved sarcophagus of a little child, and over it this inscription : " Oh, my life, my love, my little one ! Would God I had died for thee ! " Instinctively the men uncovered their heads, and with dim eyes stepped silently out into the light. They replaced and sealed the portal and left love and death to their eternal vigil. How old is love ? Old as the human heart, old as God ; " for God is love, and he who loveth is born of God, and knoweth God " (1 John iv. 8).—DR. J. H. ECOB.

THE CHRIST WITHIN

Olive Malvery has told us how that once, when she was living the life of the women in the East-end, she had worked and walked for a whole day without being able

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to earn enough money to get a bed ; the very little she had she spent on food ; and then she wandered along and at last found herself on the Embankment, and sank down on to one of the benches, wearied, exhausted, depressed, bitter in spirit, and, with the weight of it all upon her sensitive heart, buried her face in her hands and was weeping.

And by chance there came her way a poor, ragged, outcast woman, who had loved the garish day, and had had her garish day ; but upon that day a night had fallen, and she was abandoned, homeless, friendless, hopeless, penniless, save for a solitary halfpenny which she clutched in her hand, and was about to spend at a coffee-stall. She saw the tiny slip of a young girl crying on the bench, and came up to her, bent over her, put her hand on her shoulder, and said, " Never mind, dearie, you will soon get used to it."

Olive Malvery looked up at her through her tearful eyes ; and, less because of her sorrow than because of her wonder at this woman's tenderness and compassion, could not speak a word. The woman hesitated an instant, and then pressed into the hand of this chance-met fellow-sufferer the only coin she had, and disappeared swiftly into the night. Christ was there, present in that wretched, pleasure-ruined woman ; we know Him by that sign ; the Eternal Spirit of light and love ; who shines in the highest, but is not absent from the lowest, but glints there also as the gold among the heavy dust (1 John iv. 16).—REV. E. W. LEWIS, M.A., B.D.

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LONDON FLOWERS

Some time ago there was a flower show in London, and the singularity was that all the flowers were grown in London. It is not much for you to grow flowers in the country, in your blue skies, your sweet air, your bright light, and your silver dew. It is nothing to you to rear magnificent blossoms and perfect forms of elegance and of colour. But think of growing prize lilies and roses and orchids and palms on narrow window-sills, and in dingy cellars, and in dusty attics, and amongst chimney-pots! Ah! there was a pathos about those flowers that can never be about the flowers grown here in the country under blue skies. No wonder the Queen went to see those flowers. They had been reared in defiance of the breath of the million, the smoke of a myriad chimneys, dust, shade, darkness; and they had brought those things of beauty to perfection amidst those discouraging conditions. And just so, when John went to Heaven, the Elder did not show him angels and principalities and powers—they have all been grown in the everlasting sunshine. No wonder that they are what they are. But the Elder was proud to show John the blossoms that had been grown down here amongst trouble and conflict and coffins. “These are they which came out of great tribulation” (Rev. vii. 14).—DR. W. L. WATKINSON.

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THE RIVER CLEAR AS CRYSTAL

This last week one of the members of this church, a poor and old woman, who had suffered through weeks of irremediable pain, which prevented sleep and even rest, passed into the rest, the sleep of death. A few days before she died, one of our members visited her, and, seeing that she was in a doze, sat down to wait. And presently a smile played over the worn face of the sick woman, a smile which became quite radiant, and then with a start she awoke, and she said, "Was I dreaming?" "You seemed asleep," was the answer, "and you smiled." "Ah!" she said; "I saw Jesus and the river as clear as crystal. Oh! it was beautiful! beautiful!" (Rev. xxii. 2).—DR. R. F. HORTON.

"IN THE MORNING"

In one of his sermons Rev. R. J. Campbell told of a father who every night went to the bedroom of his little daughter to wish her "Good-night!" She usually, as she returned his kiss, said, "Good-night, father dear! I shall see you in the morning." The child fell ill, and it became evident that the Master was calling for her. One night her father kissed her as usual, and she said in a faint voice, but with a smile on her wan face, "Good-night, father! I shall see you in the morning." During the night the Shepherd took the lamb unto His bosom. But her word was true. There is reunion where "there is no night there" and "joy cometh in the morning" (Rev. xxii. 5; Ps. xxx. 5).

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HEAVEN SEEN FROM EARTH

On a cold, windy day in November, a gentleman spoke kindly to a poor Italian whom he had often passed without a word. Seeing him shiver, he said something about the dreadful English climate, which to a son of the sunny South must have seemed terribly cruel that day. But to his surprise the man looked up with a smile, and in his broken English said, "Yes, yes, pritty cold; but by-and-by! tink of dat." He was thinking of warm skies and flowers and songs in the sunny land to which he hoped soon to return, and he little imagined how all that day and for many a day his words would ring in the Englishman's heart: "By-and-by, tink of dat."

"Oh, could we make our doubts remove,
Those gloomy doubts that rise,
And see the Canaan that we love
With unbecclouded eyes.

"Could we but stand where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's stream nor death's cold flood
Should fright us from the shore."

(Rev. xxi. 10).—DR. ALFRED ROWLAND.



INDEX OF TEXTS AND SUBJECTS ILLUSTRATED

IN the following Index, enough of the verses is given to indicate the verse or verses illustrated. Where two texts are illustrated by the same illustration, both are given, one following the other. A very few illustrations could not conveniently be attached to texts. In a few other cases where a passage of Scripture or a subject is illustrated, the chapter and verses of the books given are to be regarded as readings rather than texts.

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THE END.

JEFFS, H.

Art of sermon illustration.

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